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EDITORIAL

This issue of Local Population Studies, like the last, includes a very interesting mix of articles, with a broad range in chronology and subject matter, as well as some excellent supporting material.

Our first article focuses upon the familiar topic of the nineteenth-century census, but from an unusual perspective. There have been calls in the past, still largely unfulfilled, for attention to be given to the census enumerators, to analyse their social, occupational and demographic profile (see, for instance, Tom Arkell, ‘Identifying the census enumerators – Cornwall in 1851’, Local Population Studies, 53 (1994), 70–5). The present article, by Mills, Wheeler and Woollard, draws our attention instead to another neglected group of officials involved in the administration of the census: the registrars and deputy registrars. Building upon detailed biographical information for Robert Coddington Moore, the registrar for Lincoln South sub-district, and James Moore, his deputy, it sets civil registration in the context of nineteenth-century career patterns in local public administration, identifying a class of person without legal training but with knowledge of the law, often with technical skills in surveying or accountancy, who might be readily called upon to fulfil such administrative functions. The authors discover clear evidence of patronage, exercised via the local Board of Guardians, as well as periodic failure of supervision on the part of the Board. They effectively show that it is not difficult to identify registrars and superintendent registrars and the bounds of their districts by referring to trade directories, or sometimes via family history society publications, and this will hopefully stimulate more research into this neglected class of nineteenth-century official.

Our second article deals with another neglected topic, and that is the rural retail trade in eighteenth-century England. Jon Stobart argues that studies of food retailing in the countryside are particularly scarce, the implicit assumption often being that villagers either grew their own food or visited the market stall in town to acquire provisions, and he explores the veracity of such arguments in the context of eighteenth-century Cheshire. The focus is principally on butchers, and on the years 1660–1760, during which time rural Cheshire was experiencing a range of socio-economic changes, most notably the continued growth of commercialised livestock farming and the spread of rural manufacturing. Employing an extensive database compiled from extant probate inventories, Stobart charts the spread of food retailers c.1660–1820, relating the patterns revealed to factors of supply as well as demand. He then turns to examine more closely the nature and activities of butchers, firstly in terms of their economic lives and then through their social networks. These reveal rural butchers to be intimately tied to rural economy and society, rather than outposts of urbanity. They owned land and livestock, and were often farmers as well as meat dealers, hence providing themselves with security from seasonal market fluctuations. Rural butchers improved their economic viability across the period, suggesting their business practices remained competitive,
while they remained essentially rural in both their economic and their social orientation.

Our third article steps back into the late seventeenth century to revisit the impact of crisis mortality upon the chapelry or township of Broughton in Lancashire, 1667-76, with a specific focus upon how it impacted upon the structure of the family and household. During these years Broughton experienced not one but a succession of years of high mortality, clearly identifiable from the parish register of the chapelry. Examination of the names and family groupings of those who died reveal diverse family experiences, a minority suffering several burials in quick succession, others experiencing burials scattered throughout the years of crisis, and the majority being only slightly affected, possibly reflecting the social and demographic variety of families within the community. While marriages and initially also baptisms increased, there are no signs of large scale in-migration, so often found in the wake of crisis mortality in early modern towns. In terms of household structure, analysis of the Compton Census suggests that the mortality crisis had little impact, although it is likely that the resulting population decline was a contributory factor to the relatively low average household size in 1676, and the relatively high number of solitary households. The small household size, high proportion of widow(er)s in the population and small size of sibling groups in Broughton are all entirely consistent with a community still feeling the effects of the mortality crisis. At the same time, the fact that the nuclear family dominated Broughton in 1676 is testament to the durability of this form of household structure in early modern England.

Our ‘Research in progress’ feature in this issue describes a fascinating project currently being conducted by Sara Horrell, David Meredith and Deborah Oxley to examine anthropometric data (on height and weight) collected and computerised data from a large number of British prison records, the major series used being prison registers drawn from the Prison Commission for England and Wales, and the Home and Health Department for Scotland. The variables collected have been age, sex, height, weight, level of literacy and occupation. The aim is to relate height and weight to these other variables, and in particular to determine both gender and regional variation, focusing upon the mid-Victorian period. The initial analysis has been of the data collected from the Surrey House of Correction in Wandsworth, which shows that English women, who in their early 20s were on par with English men, suffered a steady and significant decline over their life-cycle, a trend that was even more pronounced for Irish women. If underweightness was a general problem for the prison population of mid-Victorian England, therefore, it was also one that was significantly shaped by ethnicity and gender.

Our ‘Research note’ takes us to Scotland, and back to the census enumerators’ books. Christine Jones examines the comments in these books made by various enumerators, for which space was specifically provided (unlike in the English and Welsh books), and which provide a rare glimpse into the life of the nineteenth-century census enumerator. The overall impression given is one of considerable diligence and close local knowledge, while their remarks also reveal the difficulties enumerators sometimes experienced, as well as
occasional signs of tension between the clergy and both local and national governments.

Having only introduced the first ‘Electronic sources for local population studies’ in *LPS* 76, the fact that we are now able to publish the third such feature is a clear sign of the times, even if some of us might yearn for the days when data collection released us from our computer terminals, forced us into our cars and off to the record office. Dov Friedlander and Barbara Okun describe a data source entitled ‘Demographic Processes in England and Wales, 1851-1911: Data and Model Estimates’, which has been deposited with AHDS History at the UK Data Archive housed at the University of Essex. This is based upon a large quantity of demographic data extracted from the printed volumes of the Censuses of England and Wales, 1841–1911, and the printed reports of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England and Wales, 1851–1911. Demographic topics covered include fertility, nuptiality, marital fertility, mortality and migration, as well as composition of the population by age, sex and marital status. Other topics included are the socio-economic characteristics of registration districts, such as occupational distributions and indicators of educational levels. The provision of district profiles will render this data of particular interest to local and regional population historians of Victorian England.

Andy Hinde provides a further contribution to our series on ‘Sources and methods’, in this issue focusing upon the calculation of crude birth and death rates during the parish register era, prior to the introduction of civil registration in 1837. Andy has also again worked with Tom Nutt and Jon Stobart to produce another excellent, comprehensive ‘Review of recent periodical literature’, the longest such review that we have published to date.

**Metrics and Local Population Studies**

Some readers will be only too well aware of the apparent determination of the funding councils and other bodies to introduce metrical analysis of output quality into the realms of historical studies, to mirror procedures long used in the scientific disciplines. Many historians think that the contribution of our discipline is not measurable in any simple way, however, and have argued that such an approach is both impossible to adopt with any accuracy, and unwelcome. Personally, I am less hostile to the idea, and am also encouraged by repeated assurances I have received in discussion with representatives of the funding councils that metrical analysis will sit alongside peer review, rather than being a replacement for it. I am also quite convinced that metrics, in one form or another, will indeed be introduced at some point in the near future, whatever objections are offered, and hence believe that we should focus our attention upon ensuring that any measurements that are adopted are as accurate a reflection of research quality as can be achieved. In this regard I was horrified to find that a recent attempt by the European Science Foundation to rank humanities journals and produce a European Reference Index for Humanities (ERIH) excluded *Local Population Studies* completely from the history draft list. We were by no means the only journal to be excluded, and at
least a formal process of representation was provided. Representation was duly made, and I am pleased to announce that in the revised ERIH listing published recently Local Population Studies is included in the history list, and is ranked as category B on a three category scale. As the criteria for classification are quite demanding, this is in my opinion a very satisfactory result, and we sit alongside a number of other prestigious historical journals, and above still others that we might identify as potential rivals. The web address for the history list, which is buried deep in the ESF web site, is: http://www.esf.org

**LPS publication projects**

*Working women in industrial England: regional and local perspectives*

This recently published volume is now selling well, which is perhaps unsurprising given the currency of its subject matter and the retail price of just £14.95 for a book of 402 pages plus eight full colour plates. Copies are available from the addresses given on p. 2 above (e-mail preferred).

*Working women* will soon be added to our United States distribution list, marketed by the Independent Publishers Group via the University of Hertfordshire Press. During the last accounting year (ending July 2007) readers might be interested to know that through this route we sold 30 copies of Higgs, *Life, death and statistics*; 27 copies of Mills and Schürer, *Local communities in the Victorian census enumerators’ books*; 10 copies of Mills, *Rural community history from trade directories*; and 10 copies of Arkell, Evans and Goose, *When death do us part*. The returns are quite small, given the cost of marketing in the United States and the profit sharing involved, but it is good to know that Local Population Studies supplements are now reaching beyond our staple national market.

There is nothing further to report on our proposed volumes on *Agricultural labour and agrarian society in England and Wales, 1700-1970* and *The New Poor Law and English society 1834-1908: local and regional perspectives*. Potential authors, for either volume, are invited to contact the editors via the LPSS General Office at the addresses given on p. 2.

**LPSS Spring conference 2008**

The 2008 Spring conference will again be held at the University of Hertfordshire’s Law Faculty, Hatfield Road, St Albans, and is scheduled for Saturday 19th April. The chosen topic is ‘The local demography of deviance: crime, prostitution and illegitimacy in Britain 1700-2000’. At the time of going to press no firm decisions have been made about either papers or speakers, but full details will be provided in the next LPSS Newsletter. Anyone wishing to offer a paper, either a 50 minute lecture or a 20-25 minute panel session, is invited to write to me at the General Office, or direct to n.goose@herts.ac.uk.

Nigel Goose
October 2007
SOME COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON TWO EARLY-VICTORIAN REGISTRARS OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS IN RURAL LINCOLNSHIRE IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Dennis Mills, Rob Wheeler and Matthew Woollard

Dr Mills is author of the Local Population Studies Supplement Rural Community History from Trade Directories (2001), Dr Wheeler is parish historian of Harmston, Lincolnshire, and Dr Woollard is Head of Digital Preservation and Systems at the UK Data Archive, University of Essex.

Introduction

Local population historians have learned to consider what kind of men made up the ‘army’ of Victorian census enumerators. That is hardly the case with those who oversaw their work—the registrars of births and deaths. This article capitalises on what is known about two of their number, Robert Coddington Moore, registrar of the Lincoln South (or South-West) sub-district, and James Reeve his deputy, who in 1837 were the first to be appointed to those posts. A study of their careers is the basis for raising (and partially answering) questions such as how typical they may have been in social and occupational background, how effective was the service they offered the public and the state, how appropriate was the system for appointing them and what sort of supervision was exercised over them. The study also raises questions about the relationship between the central organs of government and those who were responsible for the delivery of services in specific localities at a time when local-central relationships were undergoing fundamental structural change. Thus our comparisons involve both our registrars as individuals, and the registration district in which they worked. The registration of marriages is outside the scope of the article since, although some registrars of births and deaths were also marriage registrars, the appointments were made on a separate basis.

The 1836 Act for Registering Births, Deaths and Marriages in England initiated the practice of civil registration in England and Wales, which began the following year. In addition to being responsible for the registration of vital events, the registrars were also put in charge of the enumerators at the decennial censuses starting in 1841, and it is in the latter context that the two following divergent views of the registrars came to be expressed. Thomas Lister, the Registrar-General who did the preliminary planning for the 1841 census, believed that for ‘these duties they are peculiarly qualified by the local knowledge which they must necessarily possess. The majority are very efficient men, and I believe them, with scarcely an exception, to possess all the
intelligence requisite to perform such duties satisfactorily’. Yet in 1890, after the Act had been in operation for over 50 years, William Ogle, Superintendent of Statistics at the General Register Office (GRO), when referring to the role of the registrar in the census process, stated: ‘He is not the kind of man who can do a thing which requires considerable accuracy. A great many of them are very ignorant men. In a large town the appointment may be worth having, but in country places the emoluments are not such as to secure good men.

At the parish level there had been a link between poor law administration and census-taking since 1801, because the overseers in England and Wales had been appointed as enumerators. Precedent, as well as convenience, therefore probably led to registration being administered through the poor law unions, formed in 1834 under the Poor Law Amendment Act; and the registration districts were to be coterminous with poor law union boundaries. The Act specified that the clerk to the board of guardians for each union was to become the superintendent registrar, so long as both the board and the Registrar-General felt that the clerk was suitably qualified. However, it needs to be appreciated that while the unions came under the control of the Poor Law Commission, the registration process was overseen by the GRO. By the end of 1838 there were a total of 618 superintendent registrars, of whom 500 held their post by virtue of being clerks to boards of guardians, 62 through appointment by guardians on the refusal of the respective clerks, plus 56 who were linked to ‘temporary’ districts where poor law unions were yet to be formed.

The role of registrar was laid down carefully in the Act and the Registrar-General subsequently published, at regular intervals, instructions for his work. Registration was a legal obligation, and a poster issued in 1837 brought the necessity of registration before the public and referred to the list of registrars’ names and addresses which superintendent registrars were required to publish. However, there were no explicit penalties for non-registration until 1874. After the 1874 Registration Act registrars were instructed to seek out births and deaths (some took their register books with them to get them signed) and individuals could be fined if they failed to register events. It was also an offence to withhold information from registrars, although prosecutions seem to have been relatively rare. Nevertheless, Wrigley and Schofield stated that: ‘Civil registration of births was notoriously incomplete in its early years,’ and for the years 1838–1841 they used inflation factors ranging from 1.170 down to 1.120 to produce ‘corrected totals of births’ from the figures of registered births.

At the time of a census, additional responsibilities were passed to the registrar from the GRO, which included the formation of enumeration districts, appointment of enumerators, distribution of documents before census day and collection afterwards, the checking of the enumerators’ books against the schedules, signing of the books and passing of them to the superintendent registrar for inspection and counter-signature (both therefore identifying themselves conveniently for historians) and the completion of payment claims for themselves and their enumerators.
Moore and Reeve

The Lincoln Poor Law Union and Registration District was one of the larger districts in the country—in terms of area, of number of townships, and of population. The wide extent of the district was largely the result of the competing towns of Gainsborough, Market Rasen, Horncastle, Grantham and Newark being at considerable distances from Lincoln, which was the most convenient administrative centre for the registration district. Its area in 1851 was 248 square miles, its population was 42,062, and it had been divided into three registrars’ sub-districts, which were coterminous with the poor law union’s relieving officer districts. The Lincoln Home Sub-District, with a population of 20,756, comprised the 15 ancient parishes of the City of Lincoln and 12 rural parishes to the north and south. In the North East (or North) Sub-District there were 35 townships with a population of 8,302, and in the more densely populated South West Sub-District 25 townships with a population of 13,004.14

The number of events (births and deaths combined) in 1851 in the three sub-districts was 1,074 (Home), 440 (North East) and 670 (South West).15 Lister had recommended that for a registrar’s district of ‘average density’ a population of about 5,000 would be adequate, giving a total number of births and deaths per annum of less than 300, but this proviso had been set aside in our area to suit its geography. The original Act also stipulated that for any registrar’s district a deputy registrar could be appointed, and such appointments were made in both the Lincoln rural sub-districts, the populations being nearer 10,000 than 5,000 but widely dispersed, unlike the much larger city population.16 Hence for the Lincoln South Sub-District we have two men to study: Robert Coddington Moore, the registrar, and James Reeve his deputy.

Initially they were responsible to Robert Cooke, the first clerk to the guardians and superintendent registrar, described in Pigot’s 1839 Directory of Lincolnshire as ‘attorney and accountant and clerk to the board of guardians’. On 3 May 1843, following Cooke’s death, the guardians elected John William Danby, solicitor, as their clerk and presumably also as superintendent registrar, although the latter appointment was not minuted.17

Moore was appointed registrar in 1837 when he was the village schoolmaster of Harmston, a village about six miles south of Lincoln. As such, he would have been readily accessible to visitors wishing to register a birth or death. However, he was soon to change his profession to that of land agent and surveyor and in this capacity he maintained an office, where he could attend to both his public and private business. His new official position would have put him in contact with clients needing surveys, especially the numerous parish surveys made necessary by the Tithe Commutation Act (1836). So, it seems that he used his position as registrar to underpin an otherwise risky career shift, his fees as registrar giving him some financial stability.

In the early years of civil registration, registrars were paid fees as distinct from salaries, a practice that was open to abuse (see below, p. 17). They received a
fee of 2s. 6d. per event for the first 20 events in a quarter, 1s. per event thereafter. The practice for the Lincoln Union (and presumably elsewhere) was that they submitted claims quarterly and the payments were authorised in the board of guardians’ minutes. For example, four successive claims by Moore in 1839–1840 came to £31 16s., which implies 516 events in the year (£10 for the first 80 and 436 for the remaining £21 16s.). By 1841 Moore’s career change was complete, since at the time of the census he was employing a surveyor’s clerk. Also in his household (and listed with the servants rather than the family) was James Reeve, his deputy. In later life, when the demand for surveys had died down, Moore farmed on an increasing scale and also gained some of his income as a landlord of a couple of groups of cottages.

Following the general remarks of Lister and Ogle, it is interesting to examine Moore’s early life, which is intriguing but often obscure. He was born 20 August 1801, the illegitimate son of Robert Moore of Harmston—of whom nothing is known—and Ann Coddington of nearby Navenby.

His youth is a blank until he appears as a witness to a marriage at Waddington (one mile north of Harmston) in December 1815, followed by five more at Waddington in 1818–1819 and a further eight at Harmston in 1820–1823. That he was invited to witness so many marriages suggests some status or position. Was he perhaps an assistant master at Robert Hall’s Gentlemen’s Academy at Waddington? We know from William Wright’s diary that this establishment taught surveying. Perhaps Moore had been a pupil there; all we know about his education is that it had not extended to Latin. His move to Harmston seems to mark the start of his association with the Thorold family, who were squires there, owning about four-fifths of the parish, besides land in two adjacent parishes. This association bears more of the characteristics of eighteenth-century patronage than we might expect so far into the nineteenth century and outside the sphere of the established church.

Samuel Thorold of Harmston Hall died in January 1820 and a week later, the village’s elderly schoolmaster, William Goode, followed him. Samuel was succeeded by his son-in-law, Benjamin Hart, who dropped the surname Hart and became Benjamin Thorold. The new squire was the son of a nonconformist minister, and his good fortune stemmed in part from an excellent education paid for by his father’s friends and family. He was to show exemplary concern for the well-being of the poorer inhabitants and it seems likely that he acted promptly to replace William Goode and to restore the school to something of its former standing—it had latterly declined to a mere Sunday school. He may already have known Robert Hall (who was to attend his funeral 16 years later) so it may be that Hall recommended Moore to succeed Goode. All this is necessarily speculative, because there is no documentary reference to Moore as schoolmaster until 1832. Nevertheless, he was certainly resident in Harmston in this period, there is no other person described as schoolmaster, and no other satisfactory explanation of how he was supporting himself from 1820 to 1832.

We must also introduce the son of Benjamin Thorold (alias Hart), another Benjamin Hart. In 1820 this Benjamin added the surname Thorold without
dropping Hart, thus becoming Benjamin Hart Thorold. Two years older than Moore, he had been trained in the law but was a man of strong passions, poor judgment and extravagant habits: for some time he maintained a mistress at Willesden Green, at that time a rural hamlet outside London accessible only by post-chaise or carriage. In 1842, he would be declared bankrupt, which necessarily tamed his extravagance. There are suggestions that Benjamin Hart Thorold and Robert Coddington Moore were closer than the difference in their station might suggest. Firstly, when B. H. Thorold is first recorded as a parish officer (surveyor of the highways, 1825–1826) Moore, though not yet a ratepayer, also served as surveyor (and no doubt did all the work). Secondly, after the bankruptcy, it was Moore who undertook the job of listing the Thorold muniments at Harmston. Thirdly, Moore’s wayward son (another Robert) married B.H. Thorold’s illegitimate daughter by his Willesden Green mistress.

We are on firmer ground with Moore’s involvement in parish administration. The first record is a payment to him in 1822–1823 for making three copies of the church terrier (survey of church property). His work steadily grew, so that by 1838 he was churchwarden, overseer of the poor, surveyor of highways, assessor of taxes, and secretary and treasurer of the Harmston charity. For at least two of these offices he received a salary; this was not a legitimate charge on the rates, so was paid for out of an ‘auxiliary or voluntary’ rate—collected of course by R. C. Moore. He had also, in 1831, assisted in producing the census return for the neighbouring parish of Coleby.

By 1832 Moore was occupying freehold property in Harmston which included his school. The building concerned still contains a well-lit, high-ceilinged extension, which appears to have been added for this purpose. White’s 1842 Directory of Lincolnshire describes the school as supported by public subscription. It would have been unusual for a charitable school to be on private premises in this way. Perhaps Moore had aspired to turn the old village school into another ‘Gentleman’s Academy’.

Despite the gaps in our knowledge, usual in such contexts, there is a sufficiently clear profile of the sort of man Moore was when he applied in February 1837 for the post of registrar of births and deaths for the Lincoln South Sub-District. It is perhaps unsurprising that the board of guardians was unanimous in appointing him. That the guardian of the poor for Harmston was B.H. Thorold, and that his position as a major landowner led him to sometimes chair meetings of the board, would scarcely have been prejudicial to Moore’s prospects.

By 1856 Moore had additionally become registrar of marriages for his sub-district. In 1867, financial problems of an unknown nature led to his bankruptcy. The following year he died still in post as registrar, despite having been through bankruptcy proceedings. Curiously, his death register entry was signed ‘Robert Moore, registrar, pro tem.’. We are unsure by what powers the son of a deceased registrar could exercise his functions in this way.
James Reeve first came to our notice in his capacity as the enumerator in 1841 for the parish of Coleby, one mile south of Harmston, because he had made a duplicate of his enumeration book. This ‘village copy’ remained there until ‘discovered’ in 2005, when it was deposited in the Lincolnshire Archives. It is possible that Reeve was conforming to the precedent set by the 1831 enumerator, George Minnitt, who had kept a copy of the printed forms which he had used for the much simpler process of preparing this census.26

Judging by the 1841 duplicate, Reeve was a very careful clerk. He had purchased a foolscap book of plain pages, which he ruled immaculately in imitation of the official enumerator’s book and with equal effect entered the details of all 427 people living in Coleby. It is worth noting that both Reeve and
his registrar signed this village copy. It is much easier to read than the microfilm version of the enumerator’s book, with which it has been compared line for line. The differences are minimal, the most serious being an incorrect addition of the number of males on page three of the ‘official’ version, where the figure 12 is given instead of the correct 13, as shown in the village copy. There are three very minor discrepancies between the two books in spelling names. Against this, there are eight instances where the official CEB carries additional information, but some of these are trivial, such as the double marks for the ends of households. Finally, there are about 10 pages in the official version where ditto marks reassure the reader that the street name has not changed since the last time it was entered, which are missing in the copy.

James Reeve was born in Leicester on 12 March 1811. By 1836, when he unsuccessfully applied for a post of relieving officer, he was living in Lincoln, probably with John Walker Reeve (not his father, but presumably a relative), the master of the National School in Silver Street. It looks as though he was taken on by Moore as an assistant teacher: he was ‘of Harmston’ when he again came to the attention of the board of guardians in 1837, and in 1838 he and Moore both witnessed a will, both giving their occupation as schoolmaster.27 The occasion of his 1837 appearance in the board of guardians’ minutes was his appointment as ‘Deputy Registrar of Births and Deaths for the South-West District to act during illness or unavoidable absence of Mr Moore the Registrar.’28 In June 1839, following the resignation of the relieving officer of the South District, he applied again for that position and obtained it by a margin of a single vote. Relieving officers were employees of boards of guardians, paid to ascertain the eligibility of individuals for relief or for admission to a workhouse.29 Reeve’s post carried a salary of £100. He needed to find two sureties for £100: they were John Walker Reeve and R.C. Moore. Exactly how Reeve and Moore interpreted ‘unavoidable absence’ is not known, but both the circumstances and practice elsewhere suggest that Reeve might have done most of the work as registrar, especially after he had been appointed to the relieving officer post.

On 3 April 1843, he married Bridget Day, the daughter of Harmston’s second most substantial farmer, who by then was Harmston’s guardian of the poor. For the next ten years, they lived at the Manor House, one of the largest houses in Harmston. The circumstances of this are somewhat odd: the squire, B.H. Thorold, had lived there before the death of his father, and he was to move in again in 1853; in 1843 he had just been declared bankrupt. So the arrangement was perhaps more akin to house-sitting than to a commercial lease.

Reeve continued as relieving officer and deputy registrar until December 1859, when he was appointed surveyor to the Lincoln Turnpike Trust. He continued to live in Harmston until 1866 but seems to have regarded his resignation as relieving officer as encompassing his duties of deputy registrar.30 Thus in the 1861 census he appeared as ‘surveyor of turnpike roads, land surveyor and auction clerk’, but no longer ‘dep. reg.’ In 1867 he was at 59 Monson Street,
Lincoln, described as turnpike surveyor and accountant, a description which also appears in White’s 1872 Directory of Lincolnshire. His office was at 9 Witham Street and his home Rose Villa, a good-class terrace house at 15 South Park, facing on to the park. However, the directory was out of date: in March 1871 he had resigned his position with the Lincoln Turnpike Trust—perhaps his health could no longer stand the travelling. Conveniently, the relieving officer and registrar for the Lincoln Home District, Henry Holmes, was also suffering from ill-health. On 6 June 1871, the board of guardians authorised Reeve to carry out Holmes’s duties as relieving officer for three months; on 10 October they formally appointed him as relieving officer at £100 per year. Holmes retained the post of registrar, and the board regarded this as sufficient reason for turning down his application for superannuation. They did, however, allow Reeve an additional £3 per year towards the expenses of his Witham Street office. James Reeve died in 1891, the year in which his eldest son became bishop of the Mackenzie River See in Canada.

It is pertinent to consider the synergy between Reeve’s two posts of deputy registrar and relieving officer. Any activity that would help him not to miss any births and deaths, especially births, would have been welcome. Such was the time he spent travelling around the district as the relieving officer, presumably able to maintain a horse, as his district was formally categorised as a ‘riding district’ in the context of registration. He needed to be in contact with parish officers such as overseers and churchwardens, and also with resident clergy, doctors and midwives, who would be able to keep him informed about the activities of paupers and likely paupers—the sort of people who might be disposed neither to have a child baptised, nor to register its birth. Conversely, however, ‘the long distances the poor had to walk to find the relieving officer’ have been noted. In 1834 executive decisions about relief of individuals had been taken away from overseers and transferred to the union relieving officers acting on the instructions of the guardians, but overseers were still important as rate collectors and a voice through which parish opinion could be expressed. It seems unlikely that Reeve made use of paid assistants to hunt down births.

We suggest that a number of questions about deputy registrars merit further investigation. Did such deputies necessarily reside in the same place as their principals? They would have needed some other source of income, so was it usual for them to be employed in another capacity by their principals? If no deputy existed, what did the public do when the registrar was ill or absent? In this context we note that Harmston was by no means a convenient location for a district for which the regular markets were in Lincoln, and the most distant parish was about 15 miles from Harmston.

The national scene

Moore and Reeve conformed to Lister’s expectations in that he had particularly noted that the work would ‘not fully occupy the time and attention of a registrar; but it must be remembered that the registrar will not be a person
occupied exclusively with the business of registration'. The Registrar-General also laid down a number of rules for the recruitment of registrars. They were to be resident householders within their districts, should not be a member of the board of guardians (with some exceptions), could neither hold more than one registrarship nor be a superintendent registrar and could not be either an undischarged bankrupt or have obtained benefit under any Act of Parliament for the relief of insolvent debtors. Our men fitted these criteria, except that Moore continued to exercise his functions after his bankruptcy.

A number of generalisations about registrars were made at the Census Committee in 1890. First, Sir Hugh Owen suggested that many relieving officers also held the post of registrar because both posts were under the patronage of the boards of guardians. The additional pay offered by the relatively undemanding task of registrar may have made up a proper salary. Second, William Ogle suggested that one of the reasons for the continuing alterations in the boundaries of registrars’ districts was because boards of guardians wished to get a little more patronage, and by splitting a single district into two an extra appointment was made possible. However, it could equally be that many amendments were made to the boundaries of registration districts and sub-districts because of the need to recognise the population growth of some urban areas, which increased the work of registrars, while it fell off in declining rural areas. For example, in 1892 a major reorganisation occurred in central Leicestershire, which affected seven sub-districts and four registration districts, but where, as in the case of Lincoln, urban expansion was much more limited, district boundaries could remain very stable.

Circumstances must have varied considerably across the country because not only was there no stipulation that ‘double posts’ should be the norm, but also the sub-division of a union territory could be made differently for the two different functions. As an example, Lincolnshire in 1851 comprised 13 registration districts, split into anything between two and six sub-districts. The three covering the biggest areas had three sub-districts, but the Spalding RD, with much the smallest area, was split into no less than five sub-districts which contained only nine parishes between them. White’s 1856 Directory of Lincolnshire gives sufficient detail to follow up this statement from the standpoint of both the poor law and civil registration, demonstrating quite widely differing circumstances. Thus, in the Louth Union there were only three relieving districts, but five registrars’ sub-districts, only one of the registrars also carrying out the duties of relieving officer. At Brigg there were three identical sub-districts for both purposes, but only one double post, while at Caistor the three sub-districts were identical, but there were no double posts. Spilsby and Spalding shared similar circumstances: there were five registrars, none of whom was one of the two relieving officers. At Grantham there were three sub-districts, the two rural districts having double posts, the posts in Grantham town being separately held.

One of the factors to be taken into account is that the unions were set up a year or two before registration began, and thus a body of relieving officers was established before registrars had to be appointed. The superintendent registrars and the boards of guardians, therefore, did not work on a ‘blank
sheet’ when making their first appointments of registrars. In all six of the
unions mentioned the clerks also held the posts of superintendent registrar,
another factor to be considered in the assembling of teams tailored to local
geography and the availability of willing and suitable men to fill the posts.
Nationally about five-sixths of these senior posts were held jointly, whereas
under a quarter of registrars were also relieving officers. About the same
proportion of registrars were working for the unions in other posts, mostly as
surgeons, but even allowing for that less than half the registrars had double
union appointments (see Table 1, below).

Lodey has published a detailed account of the initial organisation of the
Aylsham Registration District in Norfolk, where the guardians adopted the
relieving districts for registration purposes and chose three medical officers to
be registrars. In the district where the medical officer declined they appointed
the relieving officer; they also appointed deputy registrars. The guardians’
choices were not altogether well judged, since very soon the superintendent
registrar and a deputy registrar were successfully prosecuted for financial
irregularities in their poor law roles, a deputy registrar was suspended and
another absconded. For these and other reasons there were several changes to
districts and personnel by 1838!42

Over-registration appears to have been a significant problem in a small number
of large urban sub-districts in which registrars tried to increase their fee income
by adding spurious births and deaths to their registers. Some of them were
‘reported’ by assistants whom they paid for visiting houses to enquire about
births, probably because they were reluctant to spend time in disease-ridden
slums. The spurious events ran into hundreds, equivalent to about one quarter
or one third of the usual figures, enabling the GRO to detect the frauds easily
by means of local comparisons, or fluctuations from year to year.43

Table 1 shows the Registrar-General’s occupational breakdown of the 2,193
registrars in post at the end of September 1838, and indicates that a little under
half of these registrars were also poor law union officers. However, only 500
(less than a quarter of the total tabulated) held the double posts of registrar and
relieving officer, which might have offered the greatest economy of effort,
followed by 416 who were medical officers, probably surgeons rather than
physicians, using the old descriptions that gave higher status to the latter
group.44 Some registrars could be described as ‘full’ professionals, such as the
678 medical men recorded in Table 1, or the 262 ‘in other professions’ (or 43 per
cent of the total), but full professional status was not essential, unlike in the
case of superintendent registrars. The stipulation that the unions should
appoint their clerks if possible suggests that the GRO envisaged the need for
full professional status as a guarantee that they would have a grasp of policy
issues.

In Kent, as Table 2 shows, a higher proportion of registrars held double posts,
perhaps because the analyses for this tabulation were carried out for the later
dates of 1851 and 1881. Almost one third of all registrars (49 out of 154) in post
at the time of these two censuses were relieving officers.45

17
 Registrars appointed by 30 September 1838

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registrars being officers of a Poor Law Union</th>
<th>Registrars not being officers of a Poor Law Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical officers</td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relieving officers</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other officers</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,021</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In medical profession</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In other professions</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In trade</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not included above</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,172</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,193</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** For purposes of discussion in the text we have had to assume that men were not accredited with more than one occupation, other than registrar.

**Source:** Taken from *First Annual Report of the Registrar General* (London, 1838), 4.

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 Secondary occupations of registrars in Kent in 1851 and 1881

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registrars with no secondary occupations</th>
<th>Registrars with no secondary occupations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registrar with no secondary occupation</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relieving officers</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail or drink trades</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public offices such as overseers, collectors, clerks to public bodies</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountants, house, estate, or insurance agents, or the like</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical men, including two pharmacists</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various other occupations</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information or unemployed</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>153</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The fact that some registrars reported more than one secondary occupation has been omitted from the analysis; there is also the possibility that some secondary occupations, such as positions as local officials, were not reported on their census schedules.

**Source:** Calculated from D. Wright, *The Kentish census returns, 1801-1901* (Whitstable, Kent, 2003), 18-81, omitting those explicitly given as superintendent registrars, marriage registrars, or assistant registrars.

Against that proportion, 16 appear to have had no other occupation. Many of the secondary occupations were, like those of Moore and Reeve, ‘sub-professional’, land/house/estate agents for example; or holders of minor public offices, such as rate and tax collectors; or were involved in retailing or the drink trade. Only a handful could be described as fully professional, being doctors, but—perhaps significantly—none were lawyers.
Conclusion

Civil registration has been well studied in terms of how the GRO was run internally and how it was buffeted by intellectual debates and inter-departmental rivalries.46 We know much less about how it operated at a local level. It is important to recognise that, along with the co-joint Poor Law Board and its unions, registration represented an important new departure in the relationship between central government and local institutions and administrators. It was not entirely unprecedented since, for example, Customs and Excise and the Inland Revenue were government departments operating locally. However, the poor law and registration between them represented a massive increase in the amount of administration to be conducted in this way. Hitherto, government had generally relied for these purposes upon lords lieutenant, sheriffs and magistrates in quarter sessions (with their clerks), or on similar individuals acting as commissioners in such fields as land tax collection. The landed classes were able to exert their influence on administrative geography in the period when the poor law unions were being set up, as demonstrated by the example of Oxfordshire.47 After this, the aristocracy and gentry were to decline in administrative importance, but only with the setting up of county and local councils towards the end of the century was there a new structure of local government with which central government departments could work. The registration service was influenced, and still is influenced, by having been established during the half century or so separating two very different types of central-local relationship.

How does our microscopic local view enrich the picture from national sources? First and foremost, it sets civil registration in the context of nineteenth-century career patterns in local public administration, introducing a class of person who had no legal training but knew how the law operated, and who often had a range of technical skills in, for example, surveying or accountancy. Such people might serve as the first port of call for their own small communities on all quasi-legal matters. Secondly, our local study reminds us that boards of guardians, as well as exercising patronage in their own right, could be channels for more traditional forms of patronage. Squires, even bankrupt ones, could still pull strings. Thirdly, we find that our board of guardians, once its first clerk had died, became almost slapdash in its exercise of supervision over registration, not formally appointing its superintendent registrar, allowing Moore to continue in office despite his bankruptcy, and allowing at least one death to be registered by an unappointed ‘registrar pro tem.’

Finally, it may also be useful to point out that it is not difficult to identify registrars and superintendent registrars and the bounds of their districts by referring to trade directories, and sometimes also to family history society publications. Their signatures also occur in all the census enumerators’ books for their districts. The survival of the minutes of poor law guardians is less certain, and, as noted, may not even be full enough to contain a record of all appointments, let alone any significant references to day-to-day matters. Beyond this the local population historian must rely on vestry records and
scattered references in a range of documents, such as those used for our account of Moore and Reeve and for Barbara Woollings’ account of her enumerator ancestor.

Acknowledgements

This article owes its origin to Chrys Marriott’s initiative in placing in the Lincolnshire Archives the ‘village copies’ of the 1831 and 1841 census returns for her parish of Coleby, near Lincoln. Subsequently she compared the 1841 village copy with the ‘official’ version and was involved in the drafting of the Lincolnshire section of this article. This article has been significantly improved by some stimulating comments made by the LPS Editorial Board. We are also grateful to Audrey Collins of the Family Records Centre for her encouragement and assistance and to Professor Keith Snell for reading and commenting on the final draft. Any mistakes are ours.

NOTES


4. An Act for Registering Births, Deaths and Marriages in England [17 August 1836], 6 & 7 Will. IV. c.86. Parts of this Act, later Acts, and related regulations were published in the articles cited in n. 2 above entitled, ‘The new registration service’ and ‘The new registration service (part two)’.

5. The National Archives (hereafter TNA) RG 27/1. History of the census of 1841, 3.


8. This power was probably mainly used in cases of local disputes since, given the number of appointments, it seems unlikely that the GRO carried out many unsolicited enquiries.
10. An Act to amend the Law relating to the Registration of Births and Deaths in England, and to consolidate the Law respecting the Registration of Births and Deaths at Sea. [7 August 1874] 37 & 38 Vict. c.88.
11. ‘New registration service’, 55, and ‘New registration service (part two)’, 59; and Collins, ‘Our payments’, 45. The case brought against a Norfolk woman in 1838 for refusing to register the birth of a child within six weeks is reported by both Lodey, ‘Introduction’, 226–7, and ‘New registration service’, 57–9. These articles contain other examples of various prosecutions for malpractice on the part of the public or registration staff. The confusion about the relationship between Anglican baptisms and civil registration is highlighted in Ambler, ‘Civil registration and baptism’.
13. TNA RG 27/5, Item 25. Instructions to the various officers as to their duties in taking the census.
17. Lincolnshire Archives (hereafter LAO), PL 10/102/2.
18. LAO Navenby PAR 13/4/2.
19. Lincoln Central Library, Ms Diary of William Wright of Folkingham, Lincs., 1921 WRI, Glass Cabinet.
21. LAO 2 THOR HAR 1/8/2.
23. For example on 14 December 1836.
24. William White, Directory of Lincolnshire (Sheffield, 1856) 64. The minute appointing him has not been found.
25. The hearing was in the Birmingham bankruptcy court on 29 August 1867. His property was auctioned and he was discharged 17 March 1868: LAO Exley 27/30; TNA B 6/123.
26. The references for these copies are LAO MISC DON 1247/1 for 1831 and LAO MISC DON 1247/2 for 1841.
27. LAO LCC Wills 1838/362.
28. LAO PL 10/102/1.
29. In 1850 the average annual salary for these officers across 604 unions was £82: Sir George Nicholls, A history of the English poor law in connection with the state of the country and the condition of the people, 2, AD 1714-1853 (London, 1904), 412.
30. LAO THOR HAR 1/3/7.
31. LAO KQS Lincoln Turnpike Trust.
34. For example, plentiful comments were recorded in the Town Books for Melbourn, Cambridgeshire, which cover this period: Cambridgeshire Record Office, P/117 Town Book 2, 71, 146, 158, 170 and Town Book 3, 65, 77, 83, 114, 125, 135, 148. On overseers see K.D.M. Snell, Parish and belonging: community, identity and welfare in England and Wales, 1700–1850 (Cambridge, 2006), chapter 6.
35. First ARRG, 60.
36. First ARRG, 65.
38. *Fifty-fifth ARRG* (London, 1894), xxviii. Alterations to registration districts and sub-districts for the whole country are given year by year in the ARRGs.

39. Within the city the 15 ancient parishes remained as enumeration districts down to 1901 despite the growth of Lincoln’s population from 7,197 in 1801 to 48,784 in 1901: D.R. Mills and R.C. Wheeler eds, *Historic Town Plans of Lincoln, 1610-1920*, Lincoln Record Society, 92 (2004), 12; and *Census Reports*. For the country areas, a comparison of the poor law union sections of the Lincoln entries can be found in, for example, William White, *Directory of Lincolnshire* (Sheffield, 1856 and 1892).


43. Park, ‘Over-registration’. Park checked some of the spurious events and found that the records were not annotated by the GRO after the prosecutions, nor locally (p. 270). This raises the question as to what happened to the incorrect statistics of births and deaths produced by the recording of spurious events.


45. D. Wright, *The Kentish census returns, 1801-1901* (Whitstable, Kent, 2003), 9. Wright uses the term deputy registrar to denote a registrar of births and deaths as opposed to a superintendent (or marriage) registrar.


48. Woollings, ‘Orsett enumerator’.

22
FOOD RETAILERS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES: CHESHIRE
BUTCHERS IN THE LONG EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Jon Stobart

Jon Stobart is Professor of History at the University of Northampton with research interests in consumption, retailing and leisure, and in industrial and regional development in the eighteenth century.

Introduction

Village blacksmiths, shopkeepers or tailors are often seen as mainstays of rural life, serving as a barometer of the vitality of rural society. Their decline in the early twentieth century signalled the changing nature of English villages as counter-urbanisation made many into commuter settlements, or heralded the urbanisation of the countryside and the death of rural culture and values. Such interpretations are based on a particular reading—an idealisation—of the history and historical geography of rural service provision. At its heart lies a romanticised image of a golden age of rural life, of independent and thriving village communities and of a set of services firmly embedded within those communities. Whilst it is easy to recognise these as clichés—part of a constructed rural idyll—it is more difficult to establish the reality of rural retailing in the early modern period. We know relatively little about the regional and local geographies of rural services. Retail historians have concentrated on the ‘bright lights and bow-windows’ of towns. Rural historians have focused on agricultural change, proto-industrialisation, social conflict and, more recently, the village as community. The neglect of rural retailing is particularly apparent in the case of food dealers, where the focus often falls on the broader marketing of agricultural produce or feeding urban populations, rather than the supply of rural consumers.

Given this neglect, it is worth reviewing what we do know about rural food retailers in the long eighteenth century—roughly 1680–1820. First, we know something about their changing numbers and distribution. Mui and Mui argue that the small village shop was increasingly important in supplying the food needs of the rural poor, a point supported by both Shammas and Cox, who suggest that village shops were becoming more widespread in the eighteenth century. The evidence, though, is equivocal: whilst a proliferation of shops is evident, expansion in provision occurred in line with population growth, industrialisation and (gaps in) urban supply, while many of the settlements studied by Shammas were, in reality, small towns. Moreover, the economic vitality of small markets was often undermined by transport innovations and by the rise of middlemen or factors, who effectively by-passed local dealers.
and linked rural supplies with increasingly distant urban demand. The dynamics of retail growth need fuller investigation, therefore, as do the factors which might have influenced the distribution and prosperity of food retailers.

Second, it is generally accepted that village retailers were essentially serving the needs of a local rural population which was becoming increasingly market oriented due to lengthening chains of supply and growing household specialisation. In this context, shops formed an important link to the world of goods, supplying a range of non-local wares to an ever more sophisticated set of consumers. While true of grocers, for example, who drew on distant supplies of exotic goods, this kind of relationship is less certain for retailers dealing in local produce, most notably butchers, whose product range and systems of supply remained largely stable during this period. Scola highlighted the importance of linking rural supply to urban demand, but the nature of the links that butchers and other food retailers had with local and non-local consumers remains unclear.

Third, rural craftsmen and tradesmen were often engaged in agricultural activities, many of them owning land and/or livestock. As Holderness and Martin note, the additional income afforded by such by-employsments was critical to the viability of many rural trades, and their loss through enclosure caused a notable contraction in the number and range of tradesmen in early nineteenth-century Warwickshire. More generally, the prevalence of livestock and landholding indicates the close ties which bound retailers and craftsmen to the agricultural economy of the village. Less apparent are the ways in which these economic links were mirrored in social bonds.

This paper seeks to address some of these gaps in our understanding through detailed analysis of the probate records of food retailers in rural Cheshire. The focus is principally on butchers, and on the years 1660–1760, although the initial survey also covers the period up to 1820. During this time rural Cheshire was experiencing a range of socio-economic changes, most notably the continued growth of commercialised livestock farming and the spread of rural manufacturing. From being a mixed agricultural economy in the early seventeenth century, livestock grew increasingly important so that, by the end of the century, Celia Fiennes could note that ‘this shire is remarkable for a great deal of great cheeses and dairies’. This process was most marked in the centre and west of the county. Further east, sheep farming was more important, initially supplying but later being overshadowed by domestic production of woollen, and then linen and cotton, textiles. These trends towards local specialisation had potentially profound impacts on rural retail activities.

The sources

Probate records have been used on many occasions in studies of retail or craft tradesmen and their shortcomings as an historical source are well known. Those that affect the current analysis most directly are the reliability of occupational titles given and the coverage of the population afforded. The importance of multiple incomes in rural households is a commonplace.
Overton and his colleagues discuss in detail the by-employments that characterised households in Kent and Cornwall, particularly those which drew on female labour within the home. One of the most common ways for craft or service-based households to supplement their income was through small-scale agricultural production—most often livestock but also arable farming. Indeed, a key aspect of early industrialisation was the combination of manufacturing and agricultural activity in so-called proto-industrial systems. The engagement of Cheshire butchers in such by-employments is discussed later. Here, we need to consider the extent to which individuals given different occupational titles in the probate records were involved in butchery. At one level, it is possible to argue that this was true of every household with a few chickens. However, killing and preparing such animals for consumption did not make the person a butcher. A systematic analysis of all the probate records for 20 Cheshire villages revealed no evidence of yeomen, husbandmen or others acting as butchers—knives, blocks and so on were the exclusive preserve of those labelled as 'butchers'.

The social and temporal coverage of the probate records is more problematic. As probate was a legal requirement only for those worth more than £5, the circa 40 per cent of the adult population of Cheshire who left probate records in the first half of the eighteenth century represented the better-off sections of society. Labourers and those in proletarianised industries were particularly poorly represented, since their lack of household goods was compounded by an absence of stock-in-trade. While it is impossible to ascertain the exact proportion of butchers leaving probate records (there are no ‘full’ listings with which to make comparisons), the coverage is likely to have been good since they frequently owned both livestock and stock-in-trade. Moreover, there is little reason to believe that the proportion of butchers appearing in the probate records changed markedly over time, not least because their activities and holdings appear to have remained stable through the eighteenth century. Thus, while the coverage is thin, there is little reason to believe that the patterns or behaviour revealed should be misleading. Moreover, the comprehensive geographical coverage of the probate records allows county-wide analysis, rather than the localised studies possible from (some) parish registers. Indeed, probate records provide a unique insight into the number and location, and more especially the economic lives and social networks, of rural food sellers.

The number and location of rural retailers

Cheshire appears to have shared in the wider flowering of rural trades in the eighteenth century noted by Shammas, Martin and others. The number of food retailers leaving probate records grew steadily and then increasingly rapidly from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth century (Table 1). There was also a slight growth in the range of occupations to include such specialisms as fishmongers and confectioners as well as the ubiquitous butchers and bakers. By the time the first trade directories were published for Cheshire in 1784, large villages (with populations of 400–500) contained an
impressive range of food retailers: Tarporley had two butchers, two bakers, one cheese factor, and six shopkeepers (most of whom probably sold groceries); and Neston six butchers, one baker, and six shopkeepers.17 Such concentrations were exceptional, however: in general, food dealers were spread across the county (Figure 1), the growing numbers reflecting the appearance of food retailers in more and more villages (Table 1). In the first half of the period, numbers were probably greatest in the centre and west of the county, but a subsequent evening out of provision meant that only the south west and the Wirral could be viewed as under-provided by the early nineteenth century. Indeed, what is most striking is the lack of clusters: the 153 food retailers listed in the probate records being spread across 99 villages.

How might we go about understanding this growth and distribution? One set of explanations comes in terms of demand for the produce being sold by these tradesmen. Shammas emphasised population growth and competition from urban suppliers as important in stimulating or limiting rural and small town retail development. In terms of the former, the rural population of Cheshire grew between the hearth tax and the first census, from around 75,000 to over 130,000, mostly from the mid-eighteenth century onwards.18 These extra mouths to feed clearly represented significant expansion in the demand for basics such as food, but provision—as measured by the number of food retailers—easily outstripped population growth. Moreover, whereas demographic expansion was strongest in the industrialising parishes around Stockport and Macclesfield, these areas experienced significant, but not exceptional, growth in the number of village food retailers. An expanding industrial proletariat undoubtedly helped to stimulate the development of specialised retailing in the countryside as well as in towns, but strong growth elsewhere suggests that those engaged in agricultural as well as industrial pursuits were increasingly buying food rather than supplying their own needs. Indeed, it was in the wealthier agricultural areas in the west and centre of the county where provision of food retailers was greatest, indicating greater spending power in such areas.19

In reality, the situation was far more complex than simply matching supply to (growing) demand. At a fundamental level, de Vries argues that society was changing in ways that induced a greater demand for the foods sold by rural grocers, butchers and the like.20 He has suggested that rural households were becoming more specialised and thus more dependent upon the market to supply even basics such as food. Furthermore, grocers in particular were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: Cheshire and Chester Archives, probate records</th>
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</table>

| Table 1 | Rural food retailers in Cheshire leaving probate records, 1660–1820 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. of tradesmen | 1660–1685 | 1705–1730 | 1750–1775 | 1795–1820 |
| 13 | 30 | 40 | 70 |
| No. of villages with food retailers | 1660–1685 | 1705–1730 | 1750–1775 | 1795–1820 |
| 11 | 26 | 34 | 55 |
| Range of occupations | 1660–1685 | 1705–1730 | 1750–1775 | 1795–1820 |
| 4 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
Figure 1 The distribution of rural food retailers in Cheshire leaving probate records, 1660–1820
supplying a growing range of novel or exotic goods (such as tea, coffee, sugar, and spices) which formed part of the consumption practices for a growing number of rural as well as urban households. As these tastes spread, the number of rural grocers grew, especially in the late eighteenth century (see Table 2). In more pragmatic terms, only some rural traders were engaged in supplying the needs of village people. Grocers, bakers and perhaps butchers were locally oriented in terms of their customer base, but, as Scola has made clear, others were involved in the supply of urban or regional markets, most notably corn and flour merchants and, arguably, butchers. This has important implications for the location and operation of rural retailing. First, against Shammas, urban growth could be a stimulus to, as well as a limit on, the growth of rural retailing. Second, the distribution of rural tradesmen would reflect supplies of, as well as demand for, foodstuffs. As Scola has amply demonstrated, the supply area of Manchester increased through time, so that the town’s markets drew in meat, dairy products and vegetables from across southern Lancashire and northern Cheshire. This stimulated local production and drew many rural suppliers into the orbit of Manchester. It is impossible to reproduce these supply chains for smaller towns, but most fresh food was undoubtedly sourced locally.

Given the mixed nature of agriculture over much of Cheshire, foods were produced locally and were therefore available locally across the county. Even a cursory glance at the inventories of Cheshire farmers makes it clear that most grow a range of crops, kept a variety of livestock and manufactured cheese on a commercial basis. For example, William Allen of Rostherne (d. 1713) had cattle, horses, pigs, corn, wheat, hay and apples, and £5 worth of cheese. Similarly, Arthur Ickin of Cholmondeley (d. 1707) had 25 cattle, 5 horses and an unspecified number of pigs and poultry, together with corn, hay, peas and beans, and £47 worth of ‘old cheese’ (probably about 2 tons in weight). There were, of course, some specialisms that involved longer supply chains. Sheep were rarely kept on the Cheshire plain, but were far more numerous in the uplands of east Cheshire where flocks could be extensive, as with John Demerley of Woodhead (d. 1750) who had 97 ewes and lambs, and 133 wethers. More famously, Cheshire cheese was produced in great quantities for the London market and later for the industrial towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire. As Chartres has argued, middlemen were increasingly important in linking these primary producers to end consumers. The London trade in Cheshire cheese was dominated by a handful of metropolitan cheesemongers,

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1660–1685</th>
<th>1705–1730</th>
<th>1750–1775</th>
<th>1795–1820</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butchers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Cheshire and Chester Archives, probate records
who organised shipments from Liverpool or Chester. Details for the eighteenth century remain hazy, but they operated via a network of local cheese factors. Some of these were rural tradesmen—men such as Thomas Bolton of Stapleley (d. 1667), John Bate of Appleton (d. 1728) and Charles Meredith of Willaston (d. 1752). These were often substantial farmers as well as merchants: John Bate, for example, had about 250 acres of land, and a watermill, windmill and malt kiln. This gave them the financial strength and social standing to organise long-distance trade and cope with the lengthy credit lines that were integral to such dealings. However, the lack of sustained growth in the number of rural cheese factors shown in Table 2 (a trend which is apparent despite the small numbers involved), reflects a decline in their importance relative to urban cheese factors and later to agents from London companies.

In contrast, rural butchers became increasingly numerous, especially in the late eighteenth century, when their numbers more than doubled (Table 2). This growth, like that of rural food dealers as a whole, easily outstripped population growth. Butchers, then, occupy a particularly interesting position in village retailing. They were the most numerous group of rural food retailers, yet were closely linked with supplying urban demand. They were in the countryside, yet, as Mui and Mui argue, the ‘king-pin of the weekly market was the butcher’. Most analysis has focused on the role of butchers in servicing urban demand for fresh meat. Westerfield’s well-known work on London, and Scola’s on Manchester, is echoed by Mitchell’s research on retailing in urban Cheshire. He highlights the presence at Stockport and Macclesfield markets of butchers and other vendors of fresh food, including fruit and vegetables, cheese, honey, nuts and poultry. For major centres, trade directories in the mid-nineteenth century list not only resident butchers but also those ‘attending the market’, reflecting the continuation of long-established practices. Rural based butchers rented stalls and shambles at the market. These were not simply venues for selling meat, but were also frequently the place where animals were slaughtered, carcasses butchered and meat dressed for sale—at least before the urban middling sorts and civic authorities grew more squeamish in the late eighteenth century.

Economic lives

If we turn from the institution of the market to look at the rural butchers themselves, their lives and lifestyles seem to be firmly rural. In contrast, grocers appear to have led very different economic lives, linked more closely to urban markets and tastes. That many butchers held land and owned livestock is perhaps unremarkable, notwithstanding the suggestion by Trinder and Cox (based on a sample of just five inventories) that Shropshire butchers rarely engaged in farming. Land would be needed for grazing livestock before they were taken to market to be slaughtered and sold. That said, the number and range of animals was impressive, even in this relatively small sample (Table 3): almost three quarters of butchers had cattle, more than half owned pigs and nearly one third had sheep. This suggests an engagement in animal husbandry rather than simply a fattening of stock for the market. More striking, though, is
the fact that so many had husbandry ware and were growing crops. For example, William Hinton of Clutton owned 16 cows, 1 bull and 2 heifers, 5 horses and some pigs, whilst Thomas Booth of Smallwood had cattle, horses, sheep, pigs and a quantity of wheat and barley valued at over £42. At a rather grander scale, John Oldfield of Golborne Bellow owned 36 cows, 5 heifers and 12 calves, 8 horses, a pig with 14 piglets, barley and oats, peas and beans, and hay, worth a total of £151 18s. 8d., or 52.8 per cent of his estate. Butchers were also producing cheese in marketable quantities: John Vickers of Alpraham had cheese to the value of £12 whilst John Oldfield had £70 worth.35 Such a range of goods and practices mean that there is often little to distinguish butchers from yeomen and husbandmen: they were primary producers as well as retailers. Certainly, they were far more deeply involved in farming than were other rural shopkeepers, less than half of whom owned cattle (Table 3). Ralph Edge, the Tarporley ironmonger, was exceptional: he owned cattle, horses, poultry, corn and hay, along with carts and other husbandry ware worth a total of £51 6s. 8d. Far more typical were Henry Faulkner and Ralph Ampson (both shopkeepers) who, respectively, had £8 10s. in corn and hay, and £4 in hay and peas. Neither had livestock or husbandry ware listed in their inventories.36

The importance of land-holding clearly varied between different individuals and, to some extent at least, between different groups of rural retailers. As Martin suggests, land and livestock were essential to the economic viability of some tradesmen, effectively constituting a dual occupation.37 For others, though, it appears to have been marginal to their trading activities. In truth, the relative importance of the two income streams is often difficult to assess, since the stocks of wealth held in livestock, husbandry ware and crops would inevitably outweigh the flows of income generated through trade—at least in these post-mortem lists of credits. The occupational titles accorded to individuals thus take on extra significance. That people saw themselves or
were viewed by others as butchers, rather than husbandmen for example, signals that they were engaged in activities that were significantly different from those of their more exclusively farming neighbours. Probate records seldom seem to have left a tangible trace of this difference: only 5 out of 32 wills made any mention of a shop (whether these were workshops or retail outlets is unclear) and just 5 out of 27 inventories included any stock-in-trade. This was invariably of low value: Joshua Walker of Capesthorne had £2 3s. 6d. of fat and £5 19s. 9d. of hides and skin, but only 10s of unspecified goods in his ‘shop place’. Similarly, the appraisers of John Grice of Handbridge valued ‘his working tools’ at just 5s., whilst John Leigh of Lyme Handley had 10s. worth of ‘goods in ye shop’, compared with £128 12s. of livestock and £50 of unspecified book debts. These shop goods were almost certainly knives and blocks rather than meat to be sold. Indeed, only one butcher was recorded as holding fresh meat on his death, and just two had bacon. Given the highly perishable nature of meat and the extent of self-provision of meat amongst rural-dwellers, this is perhaps unsurprising. It certainly accords with the wider impression, drawn most explicitly by Roger Scola, that rural butchers were largely engaged with meeting urban rather than rural demand: they generally sold from markets stalls in town rather than their homes in the surrounding villages.

Direct evidence of the business practices of eighteenth-century rural butchers is very rare. The scale of their operation appears to have changed little, at least through the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries: the mean value of their movable property remained broadly steady during this period. That some butchers (perhaps all) sold on credit is apparent from the presence of book debts in a number of butchers’ inventories. These often ran into tens of pounds sterling, but none gave details of the status or location of debtors, making analysis of customer numbers and distribution, or the organisation of businesses, impossible. Fortunately, a rare insight into such customer networks is afforded by the accounts of Ralph Williams of Wybunbury. These cover the period 1764–1803, although systematic records only start in the 1780s. They show sales of a variety of different meats and animal products—including beef, mutton, pork, veal, offal and tallow—and how these varied seasonally. Of more immediate interest here is the customer network that is revealed. In a four month period from July to October 1786, a total of 67 people bought meat from Williams on account. Probably there were others (perhaps many more) who paid cash. Some were regular customers: 13 are recorded at least twice a month and some appear at least weekly. The majority, though, bought meat far less frequently, with 36 being recorded just once over the entire period. This suggests a core of established customers and a greater number of others who either patronised a number of different butchers or could afford to buy meat only infrequently.

Sadly, Williams did not record where his customers were from. This implies that most were local: but local to where? Was Williams trading from a shop in Wybunbury or from a market stall in nearby Nantwich? Of the 16 customers that could be traced with certainty, 11 were from Wybunbury or the neighbouring village of Walgherton, and four were from Nantwich. How do we read this pattern? The majority of customers being near neighbours might
suggest that Williams was selling from a shop in the village, but why would residents of Nantwich travel out of town to buy meat? Given that these two places are barely three miles apart, it is quite possible that Williams sold from Nantwich market, but was also favoured by the custom of his neighbours at home. This picture of rural dwellers travelling into town to purchase meat (and other goods) from the local market accords well with how we imagine retailing (especially retailing of fresh food) to have developed in the early modern period. However, it is disrupted if we look at the pattern of opening of Williams’ ‘shop’. Over the four months sampled, he records selling meat on a total of 62 days, 40 of which fell on the same day of the week. This was not Saturday, the day of Nantwich market, but Sunday—a pattern which strongly suggests sales from a shop in the village rather than a market stall in the more heavily regulated town: while Sunday markets were anathema, many shops opened every day, including Sundays. Moreover, this was the day when Williams had most customers purchasing on account, with up to 20 being recorded on certain Sundays. On other days, he recorded just one or two sales. It may be that Williams sold meat to those attending the church in Wybunbury. There is evidence that early-modern shops were sometimes located close to churches to take advantage of such trade.\textsuperscript{40}

It is impossible to know exactly how or where Williams was trading, but it seems most likely that he was combining sales from the urban market (perhaps mostly for cash and hence not appearing in his account book) with sales from a ‘shop’ at his home in the country. If this is the case, then it places butchers such as Williams in a key position in the supply of meat to both urban and rural consumers. It also makes them important links between urban and rural worlds.

To what extent is this intermediate position reflected in the social networks of butchers?

Social networks

The everyday social networks of ordinary people in the eighteenth century are very difficult to capture: by their very nature, they tend to leave few material or archival traces. Diaries and correspondence are invaluable sources in this respect, but few exist for those below the gentry and the middling sorts.\textsuperscript{41} Involvement in parish or vestry gives one insight into social engagement and community cohesion; another insight is provided by the executorial links outlined in wills and administration bonds.\textsuperscript{42} As economic, social and cultural as well as legal documents, probate records reflect many aspects of an individual’s life. Being an executor or administrator brought an individual into intimate contact with the financial and social workings of the deceased’s household. Conversely, it made the choice of executor very important to the successful management of the estate and to the social standing both of the deceased and his or her executor or administrator.\textsuperscript{43} In identifying some of the closest personal relationships, probate records represent only part of the testator’s social network. Even so, they provide ‘sensitive indicators of family awareness’ and a reliable register of significant life relations, incorporating both friends and family.\textsuperscript{44} What do these records tell us of the social networks of Cheshire’s rural butchers?
The most obvious point is that the largest proportion of executorial links recorded was with family members, the majority of which were with the deceased’s widow, hence the importance of links to kin in the same village (Table 4). This behaviour closely reflects that of rural craftsmen and suggests that, despite the growing impact of inter-rural migration, kinship relationships remained strong as a foundation for social interaction within villages. As Keith Wrightson argues, family ties comprised a dense and local network of linkages, binding individuals to one another and to the spatial community within which they lived. Indeed, the localism of these family-based social bonds and affinities is remarkable: only a handful of links were identified with kin outside the immediate locality. At the same time, however, a considerable number of non-kin relationships are identified in the probate records, a proportion of which were with individuals some distance from the deceased’s home village. Given the over-arching importance of family to rural communal life, these are particularly revealing of the broader social world of rural butchers.

The underlying reasons for these non-kin relationships were rarely specified. There are occasional glimpses, as when Samuel Baxter of Cranage appointed his ‘trustty and well beloved friends’ William Faulkner and Randle Leadbetter as executors, or when William Hinton of Clutton named his ‘loving friend’ Benjamin Dutton. Yet these examples are as beguiling as they are revealing: why were these people favoured over others? Proximity was certainly important (see Table 4) with two thirds coming from the same or the neighbouring villages, and only 3 per cent being drawn from places more than five miles distant from the residence of the deceased. Propinquity certainly allowed regular interaction, perhaps through local institutions such as the alehouse, chapel or church or through socialising in village shops. This localism was also apparent from post-mortem gifts. Inheritance strategies were focused very much on to the nuclear family as the unit of social reproduction, but small gifts were also given to a range of other individuals and institutions. Edward Davenport of Over Alderley was fairly typical. He left the majority of

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Kin</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tr>
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<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Executorial relationships of rural Cheshire butchers, 1660–1760

Notes: n=50; ‘local’ is defined as less than 5 miles from home village
Source: Cheshire and Chester Archives, probate records

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his estate to his wife and sons, but also 20s. to one of his neighbours, John Barber, and clothing to another, John Bilson. Such attachment to the local community is still more evident in the case of George Dutton of Tarporley who, in addition to personal gifts to family and friends in Tarporley and neighbouring villages, also left £5 to the poor of the parish.48

Reinforcing incentives of convenience and familiarity were those based on common social and economic experiences. This can be readily, if somewhat superficially, assessed by comparing the occupation of the deceased with that of his executors. This reveals that the most trusted friends of rural butchers were others like themselves: village butchers (who comprised 17 per cent of those executors for whom occupations are known), and yeomen (45 per cent of executors). In part this relates to the fact that the latter was the most numerous occupational group in villages, but it also reflects the economic lives of butchers which, as we saw earlier, closely mirrored that of farmers. Shared economic concerns brought individuals closer in social and emotional terms. 49

Conversely, the comparative lack of close social contact with individuals engaged in trading activities suggests a social distancing from (urban) commercial life. Fewer than 10 per cent of contacts were with towns, and the majority of these were with other butchers, yeomen or maltsters. While they may have visited urban markets to sell their produce, then, the life-worlds of butchers were primarily rural and their most trusted friends were their neighbours.

Conclusions

Given the relatively small size of the data set, some caution is required in drawing broader conclusions. That said, from the evidence contained in the probate records, it is clear that rural food retailers, and especially butchers, grew in number across Cheshire during the long eighteenth century—more than matching general population growth during this period. They were spread fairly evenly across the county, particularly in the second half of the eighteenth century, their location being relatively unaffected by urban centres. Growth in the east of the county suggests that an expanding industrial proletariat helped to stimulate the development of specialised food retailing in the countryside as well as in towns, but strong growth elsewhere suggests that those engaged in agricultural pursuits were also more inclined to buy in at least some of their food. Moreover, the distribution of butchers in particular reflected local supplies as well as local demand. The mixed agricultural economy, which characterised much of Cheshire, offered opportunities for rural meat and dairy producers, rural production being linked to growing urban demand. Thus, cheesemongers and corn dealers linked local supply to distant markets, whilst butchers brought rural supplies of fresh meat to urban markets. We should be wary, though, of overplaying the importance of urban demand: the activities of Ralph Williams remind us that rural consumers formed an important element of the customer base for many rural butchers. They also indicate that the growing demand from rural consumers was met, not just by the urban retailers that dominate our analyses of retail and consumer change, but also by those operating in villages.
If we are looking for evidence of tradesmen playing a key role in producing and sustaining rural communities—in shaping our idealised English village—then we should, perhaps, focus not simply on shopkeepers and craftsmen, but also on butchers. When we delve into the wider economic and social worlds of rural butchers, we find them to have been thoroughly integrated into rural economy and society. They owned land and livestock, and were *de facto* farmers as well as meat dealers. We can view these practices, in line with Martin, as providing security from the vagaries of the market which was, for butchers at least, subject to some seasonal variation. This does not mean that butcher-farmers were a relic: non-specialisation was perfectly compatible with economic dynamism. This is particularly apparent from their growing number through the early decades of the nineteenth century, when improved transport brought a more thorough integration into the local and regional economy, encouraging the urbanisation of supply. That rural butchers retained (and indeed improved) their economic viability suggests that their business practices remained competitive. At the same time, butchers appear to have remained essentially rural in their orientation. In contrast with grocers and mercers, who brought urban products and fashions into the countryside, butchers dealt in essentially rural products. Moreover, they counted their farming neighbours, rather than their urban trading contacts, amongst their closest friends, underlining their rootedness in village society.

NOTES

14. Stobart, First industrial region, 229–33.


17. W. Cowdroy, The directory and guide for the City and County of Chester (Chester, 1784).


25. CCA, WS 1750 John Demerley of Woodhead. A wether is a castrated ram.


32. In 1848, Chester had 35 butchers, but 50 ‘attending the market’ – I. Slater, Royal National Commercial Directory of the northern counties (Manchester, 1848).


39. CCA, DDX 352/1 Accounts and papers of Ralph Williams.


MORTALITY CRISIS AND HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE: AN ANALYSIS OF PARISH REGISTERS AND THE COMPTON CENSUS, BROUGHTON, LANCASTRIE, 1667–1676

A. J. Gritt

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Introduction

Local mortality crises have been well documented in this journal and continue to attract the attention of historical demographers. Such crises were ubiquitous in the early modern period and form one of the characteristics of the English demographic regime up to the mid-eighteenth century. Short periods of heightened mortality are immediately apparent in almost any parish register, indicating the frequency with which the long-term population increase from 1538 to 1750 was punctuated by short-term local crises. Moreover, as the aggregative analysis of parish register data is relatively simple, basic research into the scale and impact of mortality crisis is easily achieved, even by inexperienced researchers, for a very large number of English parishes.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of household structure in early modern communities. Compared with continental Europe, English pre-census population listings are far less numerous or detailed and, although much work has been done on household size and structure from the sixteenth century onwards, considerable potential remains for innovative research using these sources. Moreover, our knowledge of the household and family structure of Lancashire in the early modern period is very limited, and the role of the family in the proto-industrial phase of development, so intensively studied in continental Europe, and debated for other English regions, is significantly under-researched in the north west of England. The analysis of 100 pre-industrial English communities 1574–1821 undertaken by Laslett includes none in Lancashire and Yorkshire and, despite the inclusion of a number of communities in Cumberland and Westmorland, the pastoral/industrial areas of the north west remain largely unexplored. These 100 communities may serve as a useful comparator, but, as Goose noted, Laslett made no attempt ‘to consider variations over time within these three centuries which might have resulted from changing economic, social and demographic conditions’. This current article, in similar fashion to Goose’s study of Cambridge, seeks to develop our understanding of household structure as a means of gauging the
impact of crisis mortality and socio-economic factors on households and families.

It has long been accepted that, in England, the simple nuclear family was the dominant form of household organisation throughout the early modern period. For the modern period, source availability has enabled the dominance of the nuclear family model to be challenged in a range of community types, demonstrating the more complex, if temporary, arrangements that familial or community circumstances necessitated. Nevertheless, a clear distinction needs to be made between household composition and the functionality of wider kinship networks based on residential proximity rather than co-residency. Due to the paucity of English data from the early modern period, historians seeking to challenge the view of the nuclear family as the dominant form of household structure have been forced to use sources creatively, or utilise sources only covering a sub-set of the population, most notably paupers.

In a rare example of an investigation into household formation in proto-industrial communities in Lancashire, and drawing support from studies of nineteenth-century Kent and Exeter, King argues that the snapshot census is an unreliable guide to the levels of complex households in society. King argues that in Garstang between 1817 and 1826, 40 per cent of households experienced a period of complexity. Nevertheless, King’s research is largely based on vestry records, and despite his claim that a majority of families would receive poor relief at some point, this simply indicates that two-fifths of pauper families were subject to a temporary phase of complex household composition. While it is significant that a temporary phase of domestic complexity might be consequent upon destitution and pauperisation, the applicability to wider society is more questionable. Temporary domestic arrangements necessitated by crisis are not inconsistent with the domination of the nuclear family. In Garstang, the number of complex families in any of King’s census years—1817, 1821 and 1826—was in the range 5–15 per cent, and there were clearly fluctuations from one year to the next as the poor law authorities adjudicated on individual cases. King concludes that ‘the protoindustrial household system was extremely volatile’. However, the fluctuations could just as easily be described as temporary, pragmatic responses to individual circumstances. King explicitly refutes Laslett’s conclusion that ‘The suggestion that those engaged in protoindustry in northern and western Europe also lived in domestic groups containing bevies of their immediate kin is no longer credited’. But it has to be said that there is a significant difference between temporary arrangements of the poor addressed by King, and the domestic arrangements with a degree of permanence to which Laslett refers. Poor law evidence may help to counter the weaknesses of the snapshot census, but in the absence of the snapshot census, relying on dynamic records for a sub-set of the population, even where those records enable the construction of individual life histories, can undoubtedly seriously mislead. On the other hand, household structure is never completely fixed, except by population listings, and in order to explain the composition of the household as measured by such returns, some attempt must be made to examine the dynamics of the population in the years immediately before the listing was made.
Household structure was a dynamic aspect of social structure as families responded to short- and medium-term demographic and economic change, and as individual families were formed, expanded and contracted. Some families undoubtedly resorted to complex structures in response to crisis, either voluntarily or as a consequence of decisions made by local administrators of poor relief. But if household structures were generally reactive to crisis, and if families were drastically reconfigured due to exceptional circumstances, then it seems reasonable to suppose that mortality crisis might cause a measurable shift in household and community structures, altering or impacting upon kinship networks and inheritance patterns. It might also herald a major shift in the transfer of wealth within and between propertied families, and an increase in the demand for relief on the part of the poor. Indeed, mortality crisis ought to be seen not simply as a demographic event, but as a crisis impacting upon, or perhaps reflecting, the agricultural, industrial and commercial economy. It might also be seen as a significant community and family crisis creating both immediate challenges and opportunities, and the ways in which families and communities coped with the challenges and responded to the opportunities is worthy of attention. Nevertheless, the extent to which mortality crisis influenced issues such as inheritance, household structures and demand for poor relief would vary according to local circumstance, not least of which is the specific demographic impact of the mortality crisis. Plague, famine, and epidemic diseases were age-, sex- and class-specific, and the impact on family and community structures would vary unpredictably across time and space depending upon specific local factors.

Several studies have demonstrated that communities quickly recovered from periods of crisis mortality. In Cambridge, for instance, notwithstanding evidence of growing poverty and overcrowding towards the later sixteenth century, the population trebled between the 1520s and the 1620s, despite frequent mortality crises. This growth was sustained by ‘large-scale immigration’. The trade of Manchester was only temporarily interrupted, and soon reverted to normality, following a visitation of plague in 1605, largely through in-migration as the diminished population was replaced. Nevertheless, the short-term impact of mortality crises is unlikely to be felt equally across all communities. The economy of Manchester, for instance, even as early as 1605, was one of the nodes on a network of northern market towns with a considerably more vibrant economy than most northern parishes. Indeed, market centres as a whole, whilst perhaps being vulnerable to communicable disease, exerted a greater pull on the rural population, and may have recovered more quickly than small rural communities with a relatively fragile economy. Nevertheless, as the economy of market centres was fundamental to the prosperity of the rural hinterlands, epidemic disease in towns could spell economic disaster for their hinterlands. Conversely, a localised crisis in a small rural parish is likely to have had little or no impact on the broader region, either economically or demographically. Slack argued that ‘Plague’s impact on the economy was similar to its impact on the demography of England. In the short term, it spelled havoc for normal patterns of
behaviour. In the longer term it merely confirmed existing trends and accentuated existing weaknesses. But different causes of mortality crisis are also likely to impact upon the ability of a community or region to recover. A widespread famine, for instance, is likely to have had a much deeper impact than an isolated and localised outbreak of disease. Indeed, Appleby argued that Cumberland and Westmorland suffered severe dislocation during the famines of 1597 and 1623 resulting in long-term consequences in the markets for labour and land.

While many communities may have recovered quickly, the effect of mortality crisis on families, and on household structure, is likely to have been more severe. Indeed, as Wrightson observed, ‘Mortality crises were a collective trauma. Their impact, however, was essentially individual and familial’. Family reconstitution has shown how plague decimated families in late Elizabethan Penrith, and it would seem fair to assume that such rapid devastation would have significant effects on kinship networks and family structures. Plague was particularly virulent, was communicated rapidly within families and was less discerning in terms of the age, sex and social class of its victims than some other causes of crisis mortality. Indeed, Slack has suggested that the ‘most terrifying aspect of the incidence of plague was the clustering of deaths in family groups’. Nevertheless, even in severe outbreaks of plagues in urban centres, the clustering of deaths within families, whilst disastrous for those affected, left other families entirely unscathed. Goose’s work on household structure in Cambridge c. 1619–1632 is based on population listings for five of the town’s fourteen parishes within the context of rapid population growth, overcrowding, poverty and frequent visitations of plague and other mortality crises between 1574 and 1631, including plague outbreaks in 1625 and 1630–1631. Although he concludes that—recurrent plague notwithstanding—the size and structure of households in early seventeenth-century Cambridge was broadly comparable to Laslett’s 100 rural communities, there are some notable differences. In Cambridge, despite significant variation between parishes of different socio-economic status, household size was generally smaller and there were fewer children in the overall population. Moreover, such differences were generally more marked in the poorest parishes that had been most severely affected by plague.

Sources

Despite the work cited above, we still know very little about the effects of mortality crisis on seventeenth-century family and community structures, and the responses to such crises. This article will investigate some of these issues in the community of Broughton in Amounderness, Lancashire. Broughton was a chapelry in the parish of Preston, but its southern boundary was with Fulwood, a distant satellite of Lancaster parish. Broughton chapelry contained several minor settlements and the manors of Broughton Tower, Ingolhead and Bank Hall. Several neighbouring townships, most notably Barton and Haighton, did not have churches or ministers and, although they were separate townships, were within the chapelry of Broughton. The scattered settlement
and weak manorial control causes some confusion about the geographical boundaries to which extant records relate: some of the sources used for this study relate to the township of Broughton, others to the larger chapelry, and the distinction between the two is not always entirely clear.

The Oath of Protestation was designed to list all men over 18 in every parish and provides one basis for an estimate of the population. It was taken in 1642 in response to the growing political tensions between parliament and Charles I. The returns vary in quality, but those for Broughton simply record the names of the 109 men who took the oath, and the 131 men who refused. There is no way of knowing how comprehensive this list is. However, the returns appear to relate to the entire chapelry and not just the township, and a multiplying factor of 3.0 to 3.5 suggests a population of c. 720–840 in 1642. Unfortunately it is not possible to determine the proportion of this population resident in the township, but other sources can provide estimates.

The 1664 Hearth Tax return for Broughton lists 84 householders including 30 who were exempt from the tax. A multiplication factor of 4.3 suggests a population of around 360. Nationally and locally population declined slightly during the second half of the seventeenth century: on a national level Wrigley and Schofield suggest a decline of just 1.7 per cent between 1641 and 1676, and of 0.5 per cent between 1641 and 1666. Although these national aggregates may mask regional variations, we would not expect to see any marked change in population levels in Broughton between 1642 and the eve of the crisis.

The Compton Census of 1676 was an ecclesiastical census of communicants and recusants prepared by parish priests, organised by the Province of Canterbury for southern England and the Province of York for the north. Usually the returns only include individuals over the age of 16, so the majority are not true household listings enumerating the entire population. The quality and availability of the Compton Census is generally superior in southern parishes. Indeed, the Lancashire returns have mostly failed to survive, with Broughton township being one of just six communities with extant returns, of which most are incomplete or damaged. We are therefore fortunate that the Broughton return is particularly detailed, apparently enumerating all individuals, including children and servants, listed in family/household groupings (see Table 1). This return lists a total of 348 individuals in 97 households made up of 257 conformists and 91 recusants, representing considerably more conformists than the 1642 Oath of Protesting. Nevertheless, children were not recorded as recusants, and several married couples returned only one of the partners as recusant, therefore suggesting hidden nonconformity. The 1676 population accords closely with the estimate derived from the Hearth Tax returns, although we must bear in mind that the intervening years witnessed a severe mortality crisis. Nevertheless, the Compton Census provides the opportunity to measure household and family structure in a community that had recently experienced a prolonged mortality crisis. Due to the paucity of detailed household listings available, such opportunities are rare.
Broughton’s parish registers survive from 1653, and form the basis of the research for this article. The extent to which the quality of the registers is affected by nonconformity has not been determined, and it must be borne in mind that there was an active Catholic community in central Lancashire with Jesuit priests conducting their own ceremonies in isolated chapels. In Broughton itself the manor of Bank Hall was held in moieties, with ‘one half being in trust for the Roman Catholic missionary priests of the district, for whom it served as a centre’. No compensation for the possible impact of nonconformity has been made in the following analysis. Further problems are caused by the fact that, not only do the registers cover the entire chapelry (unlike the Hearth Tax returns and Compton Census), but there are a large number of individuals present in the Broughton registers from neighbouring parishes and chapelries.

**Methods**

This article is largely based on aggregate analysis of the Broughton parish registers, 1653–1676. This technique is used to establish the scale of mortality crisis in Broughton and to assess some of its characteristics. Analysis of the

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**Table 1 Extract of Compton Census return for Broughton township**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broughton 23rd November</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is a true and pfect accompte of all &amp; very the inhabitants and sojourners in our Chappellry according to the order to us directed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Turner &amp; Ellin his wife, George Turner his nephew, Dorothy Alston his woman servant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Barton &amp; Isabell his wife &amp; Robert his son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Arkwright &amp; Alice his wife, Henry &amp; Richard his sonnes &amp; Mary his daughter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Arkwright &amp; Anne his wife, Thomas his son &amp; Agnes his daughter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Arkwright &amp; Elizabeth his wife, Thomas his son &amp; Jenet his daughter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Symson &amp; Mary his wife, Anne &amp; Mary his daughters, George Beesley his man servant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Although the document refers to the Chapelry, Broughton township is clearly delineated and forms the basis for the current article.

Source: Broughton Compton Census, Lancs R.O. ARR 31
Compton Census provides the basis for the discussion on the possible impact of mortality crisis on household structure. However, it must be borne in mind that the Compton Census was taken four years after the end of the crisis and therefore the observed community in 1676 had had time to begin the process of recovery and renewal through a combination of natural increase and migration. The interpretation of the impact of mortality crisis on household structure and the demographic response to crisis is aided by nominal record linkage between the parish registers, Compton Census and 1664 Hearth Tax.32

Broughton in Amounderness

The chapelry of Broughton is located four miles north of Preston at the junction of the main route between Preston and Lancaster and the road running eastwards from the Fylde into the Ribble valley (see Figure 1). In the late seventeenth century Broughton was typical of the parishes in central Lancashire, being between 100 and 200 feet above sea level and dominated by pastoral agriculture supplemented by linen and wool production. Broughton was not a nucleated settlement, but had several clusters of houses as well as more scattered farmsteads. In 1831 the area of Broughton chapelry was 2,570 acres, with the townships of Barton and Haighton adding a further 2,500 acres to the area served by Broughton church in the seventeenth century.33 In all respects, Broughton was very much overshadowed by its near neighbour, Preston, which was an important regional market town with a population of 2–3,000 in the mid seventeenth century and provided legal and financial services for a wide area.34 The majority of people travelling to Preston from the north would have travelled through Broughton, on the main west-coast route between London and the north.

Early modern agriculture in the north west was primitive and improvements did not begin to take effect until after 1750.35 Indeed, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a combination of poor soils, underdeveloped communication networks and limited technology left the population vulnerable to harvest failure.36 In addition to periodic subsistence crises, the north west was severely hit by outbreaks of plague with Kirkham, Macclesfield, Manchester, Penrith and Preston, among others, all being affected between the 1590s and 1630s.37 Walton has suggested that agriculture was unable to support the population and Beckingsale argues that ‘In general, the limitations of northern agriculture were determined by altitude, climate, soil, markets and communications’.38 It is easy to overstate the poverty of the north in the early modern period, and broad regional generalisations do not do justice to the varied socio-economic structure, and relative prosperity of agriculture, to be found within Lancashire. Nevertheless, the labour structure of the early modern north west is certainly suggestive of undercapitalised small-scale production. The area between Preston and Lancaster (which includes Broughton) had the highest rates of hired agricultural labour in Lancashire, but even here yeomen and husbandman outnumbered labourers and servants 2:1. In Goosnargh and Whittingham, both of which were adjacent to Broughton, the 1642 Oath of Protestation records about 0.7 hired workers per farmer, indicating the predominance of family farming in this area.39
Mortality crisis in Broughton parish

The definition of a mortality crisis is somewhat arbitrary, but is often taken to be a year in which the number of burials was twice the average annual number in surrounding years. This is a useful rule of thumb, but it is not possible to apply the relatively simple methodology proposed by Schofield to the
Table 2  Index of burials in Broughton parish, 1661–1678

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Index of burials*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1661</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1662</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1663</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1664</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1665</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1666</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1667</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1668</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1669</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1670</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1671</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1672</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1673</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1674</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1675</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1676</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1677</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1678</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:  *Index of burials: mean average of 1661–1666 and 1673–1678 = 100.
Source:  Broughton parish registers

Table 3  Burials in townships of Broughton, Barton and Haighton, 1667–1672

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Broughton</th>
<th>Barton</th>
<th>Haughton</th>
<th>Other places</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1667</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1668</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1669</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1670</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1671</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1672</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:  Broughton parish registers

Broughton data, and the more complex statistical approach adopted by Wrigley and Schofield is inappropriate for present purposes. Unfortunately there is a gap in the Broughton burial register in 1659 and 1660 with only one burial recorded in these two years. Including these years in the calculation of a 20-year average would therefore prejudice the results. At the same time, with the period of suspected crisis lasting a full six years, adopting a short-period
moving average (for example, 11 or fewer years) has the effect of statistically removing the ‘crisis’ altogether as more than half of the years under observation are suspected ‘crisis’ years. To indicate the magnitude of the Broughton crisis, therefore, the number of burials in each year is expressed as an index of the mean of the burials 1661–1678, excluding the years of suspected crisis in 1667–1672. The results are shown in Table 2. This clearly shows that in 1667, 1670 and 1672 the number of burials was more than double the average for the period, and that even in 1668–1669, 1671 and 1673 the number was close to or above one and a half times the mean.

In the years 1667 to 1672, 339 people were recorded in the Broughton burial register. However, not all of these deaths were of individuals from Broughton township, nor indeed from the chapelry. Indeed, as Table 3 shows, 119 burials were of people ‘of Broughton’ and 106 were ‘of Barton’. Other neighbouring communities were also affected. Nevertheless, if the estimates of population above are reasonably reliable, between one quarter and one third of the population of Broughton township at the start of the period died during this crisis.42

The seasonality of burials in 1667 and 1670 follow remarkably similar patterns. The monthly proportion of annual burials shows a steep increase from the summer low, reaching a peak of 19 per cent in November 1667 and almost 16 per cent in November 1670 (see Figure 2). However, the pattern of burials in 1672 is markedly different: there was a strong peak in April, when one quarter of the year’s burials was recorded, with relatively few burials throughout the rest of the year. Indeed, in both 1667 and 1670, more than 40 per cent of the annual burials took place in the last three months of the year; in 1672 just 11 per cent of burials took place in the same months.

The fluctuations in the mortality regime during these years of crisis show that different sections of the population were affected in different years. Although the methodology here is simplistic, we can attempt to measure the impact of mortality on men, women and children. It has been assumed that individuals who were designated ‘son’, ‘daughter’ or ‘child of’ in the burial register were children (though not necessarily infants), that ever-married women can be identified as ‘widow’, or ‘wife of’ (spinsters are not positively identifiable) and that all other males are adults.43 Table 4 compares the proportion of burials each year of children, women and men and shows marked variations from one year to the next. The much-inflated mortality of 1667 clearly hit women and children most severely, with children also forming over two fifths of all burials in 1668. In 1669 adult males were hardest hit, although all adults were susceptible in 1670. The crisis of 1672 coincided with a marked rise in the number of child burials and although the mortality level was much reduced by 1673 children formed more than half of all burials in this year also.

The figures presented above must be compared to the background fluctuations in the balance between adult male, adult female and child burials in this period (Figure 3). Although the annual numbers of recorded burials is low for most years, child burials exceeded adult male and also exceeded adult female burials
in 11 of the 21 years 1653–1676. Over the whole period the peak month of child burials was March and the three months of March, April and May accounted for 35.7 per cent of all child burials, with July, August and September accounting for just 18.6 per cent. Set against this background seasonality of child burials, the marked peak in 1672 simply reflects an intensification of the normal cycle, rather than a divergence from the norm. Indeed, surges in the number of child burials occurred in 1654, 1666 and 1672–1674, when more than half of all recorded burials were of children. The fluctuations in the proportion of adults of either sex are not as marked.

Table 4  Proportion of annual burials, children, women and men, Broughton parish, 1667–1672

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Children %</th>
<th>Women %</th>
<th>Men %</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1667</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1668</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1669</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1670</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1671</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1672</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Due to rounding errors the proportions do not always add up to 100
Source: Broughton parish registers
The causes of this inflated mortality are not immediately apparent, although seasonal analysis and the impact on different age groups suggest that there was not one mortality crisis but a succession of crises with different causes and effects. A national crisis occurred in 1665/6, and there was a minor crisis in 1670/1, but in general the period 1667 to 1676 has not been highlighted as a period of sustained or general crisis in the available literature. Nevertheless, there is evidence that this crisis extended beyond the immediate vicinity of Broughton. Indeed, 1667 has been marked out as a year of crisis in Whitchurch, Shropshire, possibly the result of measles. Of the 404 parishes used by Wrigley and Schofield, 70 were in the northern and north western counties of Cheshire, Cumberland, Derbyshire, Durham, Lancashire, Northumberland and Yorkshire. Of these 70 parishes, 43 (61 per cent) experienced crisis mortality at some point between 1667 and 1676. However, only 18 experienced crisis in more than one year during this period, suggesting that Broughton was particularly severely affected.

Some effects of the mortality crisis

Although the causes of this prolonged period of heightened mortality remain uncertain, it is possible to investigate some of its effects by further analysis of the parish registers and Compton Census of 1676 for Broughton township.

The relationship between burials, baptisms and marriages during the crisis years reveals broad trends that may help to explain the demographic response to crisis (Figure 4). The peak years of mortality crisis, 1667 and 1670, coincided...
with a marked increase in the number of marriages. As these crises affected adults more severely than children, economic opportunities undoubtedly presented themselves for young adults from Broughton to marry and form their own household or for migrants to take the place of the deceased. Indeed, if the marriages represent economic opportunism as opposed to re-marriage prompted by domestic pragmatism then this was a remarkably rapid response to the crisis. Nevertheless, considerable additional work would be necessary to investigate whether or not the rate of re-marriage increased during and after the crisis years, although it remains a possibility that rapid re-marriage contributed to the peak in marriages. Few of the 1667 marriages led to recorded baptisms within 18 months, and only a full reconstitution would determine the extent and rate of re-marriage. Consequently, the synchronisation of the peaks in marriages and baptisms is not immediately explicable. As the numbers of marriages and baptisms are low, with just a handful of recorded marriages and baptisms in most months throughout the crisis, seasonal analysis is meaningless. Furthermore, the peak in marriages in 1670 coincided with a declining number of baptisms, and the low number of marriages in 1672–1676 does not suggest that the population was being replenished in these years through the formation of new households. Recorded baptisms show a marked peak in 1667 and a decline to a significant trough in 1672, the final year of crisis. However, the low point in 1672 may be directly linked to the peak in burials and is consistent with an outbreak of measles. Indeed, 1672 is the only year in which a stillborn child is recorded in the Broughton burial registers, and other unnamed children appear in the burial register at this time. Despite the low number of marriages after 1672, the number of recorded baptisms shows a marked increase up to 1680, during which time the mortality regime
returned to normal. This is suggestive of demographic recovery and population growth in the immediate post-crisis years.

In the absence of a reconstitution study it is impossible to be precise about the impact of the mortality crisis on individual families. Indeed, as the registers only begin in 1653 it would not be possible to reconstitute the population in order to produce meaningful data on age-specific mortality rates, family size or kinship density. However, the surname distribution of burials is suggestive of the potential impact of mortality crisis on family groups. Table 5 shows that of the 120 surnames represented in the burial register during the years of crisis, 39 per cent were mentioned just once, with a further 20 per cent entered on two occasions and 16 per cent entered on three occasions. Comparison with the six years preceding the crisis shows that in those years 62 per cent of surnames were entered just once, 16 per cent entered twice, and 10 per cent on three occasions. In the crisis years, 75 per cent of surnames were recorded on three or fewer occasions, with the corresponding figure for the pre-crisis years being 88 per cent. Clearly, the mortality crisis caused an increased in the number of surnames in the burial register, and an increase in frequency, but unless these deaths were all concentrated in small families, it would appear that the majority of surname groups, and the majority of families, were not severely affected by the crisis.

We can take this analysis further. In their article on plague in Penrith in 1597–1598, Scott, Duncan and Duncan examined the progress of disease within and between families. They demonstrated that once plague had infected one member of a household it quickly spread to other members of the same household, often claiming several lives in a short space of time before moving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of burials</th>
<th>No. of surnames</th>
<th>% of surnames</th>
<th>No. of surnames</th>
<th>% of surnames</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of burials</td>
<td>1661–1666</td>
<td>1667–1672</td>
<td>1661–1666</td>
<td>1667–1672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than 10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Broughton parish registers
on to the next family. A similar, though much simplified, methodology has been applied to the Broughton burial registers, using surnames rather than reconstituted family groups as the basis of analysis. No claim is being made that they were nuclear families or even co-resident extended families, but it is suggested that at least some of the people with a shared surname in a small community such as Broughton would have been related to each other, and might be taken as a proxy for family groups.

Applying this methodology to Broughton reveals a markedly different pattern from that reported for Penrith. In Broughton, few ‘families’ experienced a cluster of deaths in quick succession, and the pattern of mortality within surname groups appears to have been much more random. Bearing in mind that three fifths of surnames were recorded in the burial register on only one or two occasions between 1667 and 1672, the impact on individual families must have been relatively slight. Of the more frequently-mentioned surnames a general pattern of intermittent mortality characterises the data. The Beckett ‘family’, for instance, experienced five deaths during the crisis, scattered between January 1667 and February 1671. Five Clarkson burials were recorded between January 1667 and November 1670, three of which—Henry, Grace his wife and Ellin his daughter—were buried within eight months in 1670. The Curwens experienced seven deaths scattered between September 1667 and March 1672, including Margaret and Robert, wife and son of John, who were buried within three weeks of each other in October 1669. Analysis is slightly hampered by the fact that the registers refer to a larger population than the Compton Census, but of the three families above, only the Clarksons, with one family of eight, appear in the 1676 returns. In terms of the structure and functionality of individual families, therefore, the mortality crisis was probably not perceived as a sudden, high impact, catastrophe of the type seen in Penrith in the 1590s. Indeed, the heightened mortality of Broughton between 1667 and 1672 was more of a persistent problem that may have temporarily destabilised an individual family by the loss of a child, carer or breadwinner, but did not cause particularly rapid change in household structure or in family relationships.

This argument is further highlighted by extracting identifiable families from the surname groups. In 1676, the Charnleys occupied two households in Broughton township with 12 Charnley burials in the period between October 1667 and September 1672. These 12 burials comprised seven children, three adult females and two adult males. However, these individuals were exclusively recorded as from Barton or Haighton, and affected six distinct families. The Singletons are another example. In 1676, 13 Singletons were spread across four households in Broughton township, yet 20 Singletons were buried between October 1667 and March 1672, comprising nine children, eight adult women and three adult men, with particular concentrations at the time of peak mortality. Nevertheless, these burials affected at least 12 identifiable families. Only the family of Richard Singleton of Highgate Lane was particularly unfortunate. Richard married Ellen Walker in June 1668; she was buried on 1 November 1670, followed by an unnamed child on 14 December. Three more of his children—Henry, Margaret and William—were buried
within nine days of each other in March 1672, when Richard himself was
described as a pauper. A Richard Singleton appears as a recusant in the
Compton Census, along with Elizabeth his wife and three children, Edward,
George and Margaret, although it is not clear if this is the same individual, as
the Broughton registers do not record the marriage of Richard and Elizabeth,
and the baptisms of the three children found in the Compton Census are not
recorded.

Further examples of multiple burials from surname groups could be given, but
in a further attempt to indirectly measure the experience of mortality crisis
within family groups, an alternative approach has been adopted. The
preceding analysis of surname groups experiencing multiple burials during the
period of crisis is dependent upon the population at risk, and surname groups
are not representative of family groups. Indeed, the more common a surname
the much greater likelihood that burials of individuals with the same surname
took place in quick succession, and this does not necessarily tell us very much
about the progress of the crisis within family groups. Indeed, as has been
demonstrated, surname groups are not a sufficiently robust proxy for families.
In order to investigate the potential impact of the crisis on individual families
in a slightly different way, and in an attempt to minimise the extent to which
common surnames dominate the analysis, the burial interval between
individuals of the same surname was measured, comparing the period 1661–
1666 with 1667–1672. Excluding servants, 90 per cent of households in 1676
contained only one surname, and although some of these surnames were
common to more than one household, the interval between burials of
individuals with the same surname could be taken as a proxy for the minimum
interval between burials of members of the same household. The results of this
analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 demonstrates that the mean interval between burials of individuals
with the same surname was significantly reduced during the years of crisis, but
was never less than 240 days, or about 8 months. The median burial interval
was actually shorter before the crisis than it was during the crisis years, and the
overall proportion of burials of two or more individuals with the same
surname occurring within 28 days of each other was just 12.5 per cent. 49
Despite the fact that a full reconstitution has not been carried out, this analysis
provides confirmation that the mortality crisis did not decimate families, and
nor was it common for individual families to experience several burials in
quick succession.

**Household structure**

Despite the general lack of clustering of burials within families at times of peak
mortality, it might be expected that a crisis which claimed the lives of between
one quarter and one third of the population of Broughton township might have
had an effect upon the household structure of the community. Indeed, it might
be expected that mortality crisis would have resulted in a greater proportion of
laterally and vertically extended households as a direct response to
demographic collapse. This is especially so when, as demonstrated above, the
mortality crisis affected the majority of families, but appears not to have obliterated entire families which could have been replaced by new conjugal units. Indeed, extended households might have been the product of the death or incapacity of key family members: orphaned children might find themselves living with aunts, uncles or grandparents; the poor and infirm might find themselves living with able-bodied relatives; widows and widowers might find themselves living with relatives in order to provide emotional and economic support. The number of solitaries and couples without children might be inflated by the death of spouses and offspring. Nevertheless, there is considerable difficulty in identifying some complex households. Re-marriage and adopted orphans, for instance, can be impossible to detect in population listings, and can only be identified following considerable reconstruction work. Servants, also, may actually be hidden kin, as has been demonstrated for the nineteenth century.50

Slack has argued that poverty was often a more serious consequence of plague outbreaks due to a combination of death, morbidity, and the interruption of trade. The Broughton evidence suggests that contemporaries believed Broughton to be ‘overburthened with poore’ during the crisis years.51 There is nothing unusual in overseers claiming their parish to be encumbered with a pauperised population, but the frequency with which such statements are found should not detract from the essential fact that they may be based in truth, and not simply a convenient argument to place before the magistrate’s bench. Quarter Sessions petitions from the years of crisis are certainly indicative of poverty, sickness and complex domestic arrangements resulting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>61</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean burial interval (days)</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median burial interval</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of burials within 28 days</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Broughton parish registers

Table 6(a) Burial interval, Broughton, 1667–1672

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>29</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean burial interval (days)</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median burial interval</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of burials within 28 days</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6(b) Burial interval, Broughton, 1661–1666

54
from death and desertion, comparable with poor law orders made in nearby Garstang in the early nineteenth century. Broughton petitions and relief orders increased during the crisis from six orders between Midsummer 1662 and Epiphany 1666/7 to 13 orders between Easter 1667 and Easter 1672, falling to five orders between Easter 1674 and Easter 1679. However, it must also be noted that these only relate to a minority of the population and a small number of families repeatedly came to the attention of the magistrates. These families were clearly struggling to make ends meet either through their own fecklessness or misfortune, but whether this evidence allows us to make more general conclusions remains to be seen. Nevertheless, the Quarter Sessions evidence is worthy of some discussion, not least because of the light it sheds on the impact of the mortality crisis in particular cases.

The evidence for sickness, despite its rarity, is confirmation that the observed mortality crisis is not the result of fluctuations in registration. At the Michaelmas sessions, 1671, it was said of Elizabeth Ranald that ‘through devine pvidence [she] is become poore and by continuall sicknesse is so infirme in bodie that shee is wholie disabled to releeve herself [sic]’. However, she was described as ‘old’, which may of course explain her infirmity, but she was thought to be unlikely ‘ever to bee restored to anie such measure of strength as to give anie thinege towards her livelihood by her labours [sic]’. At the Easter sessions, 1671, John Clarkson petitioned for relief on the grounds that he had a wife and six children, none of whom were able to work. John himself was ‘through sickness much disinabled to follow any work’ a situation that was not helped by his ‘lame daughter who is not able to doe anything, much less begg [sic]’, although this may have been a long-term condition. At the Preston sessions held at Easter 1670, Elizabeth Livesay, a tabler with Richard Wilkinson, was said to have been ‘lately visited wth a very sever sicknes whereby she is reduced to very much weaknes and inabylyty of body to get abroad to … beg any releefe [sic]’. In these and in other cases, morbidity led to poverty, and petitions for relief followed. Other petitions for relief were not specifically linked to sickness, but are nevertheless indicative of economic dislocation which was frequently the cause of complex domestic structures.

Henry Singleton left Broughton for London in 1666, leaving his wife, Alice, and two sons, Andrew and James, destitute. Alice petitioned the Quarter Sessions at Easter 1667, asking them to provide a suitable ‘place of habitation’. However, in the summer of 1667 Alice went to London to join her husband, boarding out her two children for six months with Ellen Arthwright. By Midsummer 1668 neither parent had returned, and, although the children were still in the care of Ellen Arthwright, no financial provision had been made for their upkeep. Henry Singleton, the father, was owed a total of £6 10s. by several local people, and the children had also been left a legacy of £7 by James Fletcher. Although the children were being maintained ‘by the town’, the overseers and churchwardens petitioned Quarter Sessions to get an order for the executors and debtors to pay for the upkeep of the children, who were, apparently, complicit. The Overseers’ petition was repeated in 1671 and at
Easter 1672 Ellen Arthwright petitioned to be reimbursed 53s. by the Overseers for the ‘table wages’ of the two children.\textsuperscript{57}

Further cases show the experience of individual families, or shed light on the household structure contained with the Compton Census. A settlement examination of 1677/8 for Henry Walmesley, for instance, shows that he was a journeyman tailor, and that his presence in his brother’s household in 1676 was merely a temporary measure and not a consequence of the mortality crisis.\textsuperscript{58} The relief order for the orphans of Lawrence Tomlinson, however, was issued some eight years after the death of their parents. Lawrence was buried in November 1670, with his widow Anne following in January 1671. However, it was not until Easter 1679 that an order was made for their maintenance.\textsuperscript{59} It is not clear how the children had been maintained in the intervening years, but in 1676 there was a Lawrence Tomlinson resident as a servant in the household of Richard Goodshaw, with the only other household member being a female servant, Anne Turner.

Table 7 shows the household structure in Broughton in 1676, calculated from the Compton Census. The average household size of 3.6 is below the 4.75 average for England suggested by Laslett, but does lie within an acceptable range suggested by Arkell and is similar to the poorest of the Cambridge parishes, and labouring households, examined by Goose.\textsuperscript{60} The table shows the dominance of the nuclear family with over 80 per cent of families falling into the third class (simple households). Solitaries formed around 12 per cent with extended and multiple families forming around 6 per cent. Apart from the low average household size, there is no evidence that household structure in Broughton was significantly affected by the mortality crisis. Indeed, although the Quarter Sessions evidence does suggest that mortality crisis could lead to complex household structures, the few examples cited above are an insufficient basis for a more general argument. Indeed, basing an assessment of household structure on these and similar cases alone would be grossly misleading. Analysis of the Compton Census demonstrates that they are not the tip of an iceberg, but are exceptions to the general pattern which saw the nuclear family dominate in Broughton, just as it did in other early modern communities facing the ravages of disease and concomitant socio-economic dislocation.

Nevertheless, in order to fully assess the impact of mortality crisis on household structure we would need either a pre-crisis census comparable with the Compton Census or a sophisticated modelling technique that would enable us to reconstruct a hypothetical community structure. In the absence of these the remaining option is to compare Broughton with other pre-industrial communities. In Ealing, Middlesex, nuclear families formed 78 per cent of all families, solitaries 12 per cent with extended and multiple families forming 8 per cent in 1595.\textsuperscript{61} Chaytor’s work on Ryton, Co. Durham, shows that nuclear families formed 60 per cent of all households, with 12 per cent solitaries, 12 per cent extended and 16 per cent indeterminate in 1595.\textsuperscript{62} Further individual communities could be cited for comparative purposes, but it is possible to offer some comparisons between Broughton and a sample of 100 pre-industrial English communities, 1574–1821, as reported by Laslett.\textsuperscript{63}
We have already established that household size in Broughton township in 1676 was low, at just 3.6. It is therefore not surprising to see that solitaries were twice as common in Broughton as in other pre-industrial communities, and that 63 per cent had four or fewer members against 48 per cent of Laslett’s sample (Table 8). However, in terms of the sex ratio and the marital status of males in the population there are no significant differences between Laslett’s sample and the Broughton evidence (Table 9). However, the position of females shows some significant differences, particularly in the proportion of single females, which were less common in Broughton, and widowed females,
who formed a significantly higher proportion of the adult female population of Broughton than in other pre-industrial communities.

Comparison of the child populations shows that the proportion of children in the population was virtually identical, albeit with a markedly different sex ratio (Table 10). The proportion of households with children was only slightly lower in Broughton, but the sibling groups were generally considerably smaller here than elsewhere. Indeed, while only 30 per cent of sibling groups in pre-industrial communities contained either one or two children, over 45 per cent of sibling groups in Broughton were of this size (Table 11).

On this evidence, Broughton township in 1676 appears to have been fairly typical of English communities in this period, albeit with an average household size below the national average. Nevertheless, what is not yet fully clear is whether or not the typical structure but low household size represented something of a recovery in the period 1672–1676, or whether it is simply a reflection of the scale and demographic impact of the mortality crisis.

Table 8  Proportion of households of sizes 1 to 10 and over

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>10+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91 communities 1564–1821</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>14.75</td>
<td>16.72</td>
<td>15.69</td>
<td>14.62</td>
<td>11.69</td>
<td>7.91</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broughton 1676</td>
<td>11.34</td>
<td>17.53</td>
<td>28.87</td>
<td>16.49</td>
<td>10.31</td>
<td>7.22</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 9  Population by sex and marital status, English communities and Broughton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex ratio (M:F)</th>
<th>English communities 1574–1821</th>
<th>Broughton, 1676</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion married</td>
<td>91.3:100</td>
<td>96.6:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion widowed</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion single</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of males married</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of males widowed</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of males single</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of females married</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of females widowed</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of females single</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Broughton data: Lancs R.O. ARR 31; 1574–1821 figures from Laslett, ‘Size and structure of the household’, 215. The sex ratio is based on 70 communities, the proportions are based on 61 communities.
To develop this argument still further, we can investigate the longevity of the presence of surnames through the parish registers and the Compton Census. As the Compton Census records all individuals in Broughton township in 1676, this provides us with an opportunity to estimate how many of those families were new migrants appearing during or after the mortality crisis as the community was recovering. Of the 81 surnames in the Broughton Compton Census, 51 (63 per cent) were recorded in the registers before the first year of the mortality crisis. One surname first appears in a burial record of 1673 and one as a baptism in 1676. In addition two surnames appear for the first time as baptisms during the years of crisis with a further three first appearing as burials during the crisis. This is not suggestive of a significant wave of immigrants due to the mortality crisis. On the other hand, 18 surnames (22 per cent) do not appear in the parish registers at all between 1653 and 1676, although they were clearly resident in Broughton in 1676. Nevertheless, these 18 surnames represent only 35 individuals, or 10 per cent of the township population. Thirteen of these individuals were servants, one was indeterminate, leaving only 21 individuals (6 per cent of the population) who appear to be ‘permanent’ incomers to the community. This is further backed up by the fact that no new surnames appear in the Broughton registers due to marriages between 1666 and 1676, indicating clearly that the number of
incomers was only small, and that they were either married before they became resident in Broughton, or if not that the marriages took place elsewhere.

Conclusions

The conclusions to be drawn from this study must remain tentative, as it is apparent that a much more detailed study needs to be carried out, taking full advantage of nominal record linkage techniques and a wider range of primary source material. Nevertheless, this study has demonstrated several key aspects of demographic change in Broughton in the ten years before the Compton Census. It is apparent that there was not one mortality crisis, but a series of three—possibly linked—crises in 1667, 1670 and 1672. Each peak in burials affected a different part of the population and the seasonal distribution of burials also varied. This suggests that the mortality crises had more than one cause. However, it is also apparent that families had varied experiences of mortality in this period, with a minority suffering several burials in quick succession, others experiencing burials scattered throughout the years of crisis, and the majority being only slightly affected. This may be related to the demographic and economic structure of individual families: the poor, and families with large numbers of 'vulnerable' individuals such as the very young or the elderly, might have been more susceptible to the effects of malnourishment and disease. Nevertheless, it is clear that the crisis did not lead to significant waves of inwards migration, although the early years of the crisis were also notable for an increase in marriages. Some of these marriages could be accounted for by re-marriage, but it is undoubtedly the case that new households were formed in the wake of heightened mortality as young adults took advantage of the opportunities opened up by the peaks in mortality in 1667 and 1670. These years had witnessed the deaths of large numbers of adult males and females, as well as seeing an increased number of marriages and a peak in the number of baptisms in the first year of crisis. It could be argued that this caused a change in the age structure of the population, with an increase in the proportion of infants and young children, which left Broughton susceptible to further demographic collapse in April 1672, and a significant peak in child burials in that year. The number of recorded baptisms increased in the years immediately following the crisis, although burials continued to exceed baptisms.

In terms of household structure, comparison with other studies of pre-industrial English communities suggests that the mortality crisis had little impact, although it is likely that the population decline was a contributory factory to the low average household size in 1676. Indeed, this may reflect the large numbers of child deaths and the high number of recent marriages, resulting in an increased number of incomplete families in Broughton in 1676. The number of solitaries in the Broughton population was significantly higher than in Laslett's sample parishes, as was the proportion of widows and widowers. Nevertheless, given the diversity of Cambridge c. 1630, Broughton c. 1676, and 100 communities 1574–1821, the broad uniformity of household
composition requires some explanation. Indeed, the general similarity could call into question the validity of population listings as a source of measuring household structure, as King has suggested.

Further evidence needs to be brought to bear on this issue, especially for pre-industrial communities, but we might consider the possible motivations for individuals and families to respond to crisis by clustering and forming complex households. For orphaned children, the answer is obvious enough, and such children may have found themselves living with kin or being farmed out to the wider community. However, the demographic impact of the mortality crisis was such that few children were orphaned during this period. Even in cases of orphaned children, or where families lost one parent leaving the survivor unable to cope, farming children out to kin and community was not the only option. Such children might just as easily be put into service in neighbouring communities, or apprenticed into nearby Preston. In this respect, the proximity of Preston could have acted as a safety-valve, releasing pressure from within Broughton by placing orphans and children from large or poor families and, in so doing, indemnifying the Broughton overseers against future demands for relief. The motivation for forming complex families may have come from the pooling of resources to lessen the financial burden on the family group. However, if Broughton was overburdened with poor, as the overseers claimed, then there is little advantage in simply creating larger units of paupers who did not have the resources to provide mutual support. Some reduction in expenditure could have been gained from the sharing of rent and fuel costs, but during a period of economic stagnation and demographic collapse, there was likely to be deflationary pressure on rents anyway. The number of households in Broughton increased from 84 in 1664 to 97 in 1676, but the low mean household size suggests that there was little pressure on the housing stock. This might also have lead to deflationary pressure on rents.

The broad similarities between Broughton, Cambridge and Laslett’s sample could suggest that the sources may be concealing as much as they reveal. Certainly Cambridge in the 1630s had little in common with Broughton in the 1670s. Nevertheless, it may well be that Broughton had ‘recovered’ from the effects of mortality crisis by 1676, and that a temporary, but invisible, phase of more complex domestic composition had come to an end. This seems unlikely, although to measure the impact of mortality crisis on household structure with any certainty a series of population listings would need to be available—taken before, during and in the immediate aftermath of peak mortality—and a full reconstitution of the population would need to be carried out. Nevertheless, the small household size, high proportion of widow(er)s in the population and small size of sibling groups in Broughton are all entirely consistent with a community still feeling the effects of the mortality crisis. At the same time, the fact that the nuclear family dominated Broughton in 1676 is testament to the durability of that form of household structure in England. Indeed, despite the demographic and economic disruption of the crisis years, it seems that few families responded by fundamentally altering their household composition. Even if families had experienced a temporary phase of complexity, this had
ended by 1676, showing just how transitory such phases were. Moreover, it is unlikely that in the aftermath of the trauma of a mortality crisis the community had the desire to reconfigure itself twice in quick succession, firstly by creating complex households, and then quickly returning to ‘normality’. The more logical conclusion is that such reconfigurations did not take place in anything other than a very small number of cases. The few cases of complex families during the crisis years evidenced by the Quarter Sessions petitions are unlikely to signify a larger-scale response to crisis. Indeed, the evidence for the domination of the nuclear family in Broughton is unequivocal and to study household structure without access to a detailed population listing would be very misleading indeed.

NOTES.
1. The initial stage of this research was undertaken by a group of undergraduate students at the University of Central Lancashire, to whom I am greatly indebted. I am particularly grateful to Liz Edwards, one of those former undergraduates, who is now engaged in a survey of the late 1720s mortality crisis in Lancashire, for her comments on an earlier draft of this article. I would also like to thank the delegates at the Spring conference of the Local Population Studies Society in April 2006 and the editorial board of Local Population Studies for their generous advice and criticisms of an earlier version.
8. P. Laslett, ‘Family, kinship and collectivity as systems of support in pre-industrial Europe: a


32. For a discussion of nominal record linkage see G. Morton, ‘Presenting the self: record linkage and

33. Census of Great Britain, 1831. Abstract of the answers and returns made pursuant to an Act, passed in the eleventh year of the reign of His Majesty King George IV, intituled ‘An Act for taking an account of the population of Great Britain, and of the increase or diminution thereof.’ Enumeration Abstract Vol I, 1831 BPP 1833, XXXVI (149), 286.


42. It is impossible to know the exact proportion. Adding the 119 Broughton burials to the 348 individuals enumerated in Broughton township in 1676, results in a total population of 467. The 119 burials amount to one quarter of this population. However, this does not take into account people enumerated in 1676 as infants, or recent in-migrants. The population estimate for 1664 cited above was 360, therefore the 119 burials represent approximately one third of the pre-crisis population. Nevertheless, this proportion is suggestive only of the likely scale of the crisis and should not be taken to represent precision.

43. Laslett and Wall, Household and family in past time, 86.

44. Excluding 1659 and 1660 when only one burial was recorded.


47. The 43 parishes were: Bunbury, Chester, Frodsham, Nantwich and Sandbach (Cheshire); Crosthwaite and Greystoke (Cumberland), Dronfield and Wirksworth (Derbyshire), Darlington and Whithburn (Durham); Ashton under Lyne, Hawksworth, North Meols, Radcliffe, Tunstall and Warton (Lancashire); Berwick, Earsdon, Felton and Tynemouth (Northumberland); Bridlington (Yorkshire, E. Riding); Easingwood, Kirkdale, Sessey and Yarm (Yorkshire, N. Riding); Adel, Burnsall, Carlton, Clapham, Comisburgh, Darfield, Dewsbury, Emley, Gisburne, Guisely, Ledsham, Otley, Skipton, Thornhill, Waddington, Wath (Yorkshire, W. Riding)


49. Number of burial intervals during years of crisis on table 5 = 128, of which 16 pairs of burials took place within 28 days.

50. Cooper and Donald, ‘Households and “hidden” kin’.


52. King, ‘Proto-industrial family’.


54. Lances R.O. QSP/374/3.


57. Lances R.O. QSP/322/10; QSP/374/6; QSP/382/11; QSP/382/6.

63. Laslett, 'Size and structure of the household'.
Anthropometric data has provided a new source of information with which to quantify aspects of living standards. Traditional measures, such as Gross National Product per capita, ignore questions of distribution and fail to capture non-market production and services and other elements vital to determining welfare, such as health and work intensity. Height and weight data can capture some of these factors. Historical analyses have typically relied on height data. How tall an individual grows is a function of genotype (determining growth potential) and environmental factors (determining the actual outcome). Genetic make-up puts a maximum limit on the height an individual can attain, but how closely that limit is approached depends on a delicate balancing act between nutritional intake on the one hand, and energy expenditure made by working, system maintenance, fighting disease, resisting cold or compensating for other disamenities on the other. Nutrition is considered by far the most important of these environmental factors. If average nutritional status is good, potential is reached. When nutrition is inadequate to meet the demands placed on the growing body, the period of growth is prolonged and stunting may occur. Much data has been collected, but the correlation between trends in heights and in living standards remains contested. However, the data have proved more successful in capturing differences between socio-economic groups, by gender and across regions. For instance, work on life expectancy and infant mortality in towns confirms the pessimistic view of urbanisation yielded by the data on heights.

Anthropometric data is also forming a cornerstone of welfare analysis in developing countries. Here data on height and weight is frequently used to assess the position of children in the poorest countries. Better than any other
single index’, argue the child biologists Eveleth and Tanner, ‘the average values of children’s heights and weights reflect accurately the state of a nation’s public health and the average nutritional status of its citizens . . . This is especially so in developing or disintegrating countries. Thus a well-designed growth study is a powerful tool with which to monitor the health of a population, or to pinpoint subgroups of a population whose share in economic and social benefits is less than it might be.’

Height tells us about cumulative nutritional status but is unable to date nutritional ‘insults’ exactly. Nor can heights respond to conditions experienced during adulthood. Weight is different, offering a guide to current nutritional status. Across an individual’s lifetime, weight can fluctuate in response to shifting levels of nutrition, demands on that nutrition, and also illness and the ability to absorb nutrients. As it is normal for height and weight to be strongly correlated, a measure of weight adjusted for height is used, typically the Body Mass Index (BMI) measured as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in metres.

The BMI appeals to researchers of both developing and developed countries, although for the opposite reasons of measuring under-consumption and over-consumption respectively. Extremes of underweight and overweight are associated with health risks. Waaler’s pioneering longitudinal study of 1.8 million Norwegians, commencing in 1963 and including some 18 million observation years, identified a ‘bathtub-shaped’ mortality risk curve when mortality was plotted against BMI for different ages: there was a large range of body mass values around the mean for which mortality did not vary, but at either extreme mortality was elevated.9 High levels of risk from being overweight started around a BMI of 27 kg/m², those from being underweight at BMIs below 21 kg/m². A person is undernourished when energy intake is inadequate to sustain both a stable body weight and ‘a socially desirably level of activity’.10 Undernourishment results in less energy for work and for fighting illness and greater susceptibility to many infections and diseases.11

Weight data has been typically unavailable for historical populations.13 But the discovery of large numbers of recorded height and weight data for prisoners has allowed us to start making these comparisons. The mass of data available enables us to look at Ireland, Scotland and Wales alongside England and so move away from a focus on industrialisation to considering a wider set of economic transformations underway in the nineteenth century, such as de-industrialisation in parts of Ireland and Scotland. The data are available for men, women, girls and boys, thus avoiding the neglect of women and children and the absence of the household in most discussions of living standards over this period. It is through the family that individuals experience well-being, as it is here that they gain access to pooled resources such as nutrition, housing and education. But males and females are not always subject to equal treatment within the household and one of the aims of the research is to identify the gendered consequences of economic change. Development economists have
highlighted the unequal division of resources within the household and have attributed this to power over decision making, which may itself arise, in part, from labour market participation and other economic contributions. Economic historians too have started to look within the family and consider how experience may vary by gender. Work on heights of men and women during British industrialisation tied the fall in women’s status to declining labour market opportunities. This finding has been reinforced by work on differential mortality rates. Other authors have also mapped a complex set of relationships between economic opportunity and the allocation of resources within the household. This body of research confirms that well-being is experienced through the medium of the family, and thus how families operated to secure and distribute resources is a fundamental economic question.

Although the notion of pro-adult-male gender bias in resource allocation in nineteenth-century households is in keeping with contemporary anecdotal evidence, recent anthropometric work has struggled to identify a correlation. Roderick Floud’s work on heights and weights reaches the conclusion that ‘All one can say is that these new data do not support the suggestion that there were gross inequities in the division of resources within nineteenth century households’. In a review of the existing anthropometric evidence Bernard Harris similarly concludes that ‘taken together with the evidence provided by children’s heights, the mortality data provide few grounds for believing that past generations of girls were any more likely to suffer discrimination in the distribution of essential resources than girls today’. Thus gender differences in access to resources remain contested, and this is a key issue to be addressed by the prison data. The variety of socio-economic and geographical backgrounds of the prison population also allow links to be made between inequality and local economic conditions.

The data

The project has collected and computerised data from a large number of British prison records. The intention is to capture regional as well as gender differences and, to this end, the major series used are prison registers drawn from the Prison Commission for England and Wales, and the Home and Health Department for Scotland. In general the variables collected have been age, sex, height, weight, level of literacy and occupation. Our initial analysis has been of the data collected from the Surrey House of Correction in Wandsworth, and we therefore focus on the nature of these data and the results yielded so far in what follows.

Houses of correction formed one branch of the local prison system. Dating back to Elizabethan times, houses of correction (also known as bridewells) were locally-administered institutions aimed at ‘correcting’ the behaviour and attitudes of welfare recipients and misdemeanants (those guilty of petty crime, primarily social incivilities and thefts below the value of one shilling). From 1706 parliament permitted judges to sentence convicted felons (more serious offenders, such as those thieving goods worth one shilling of more, pickpockets, shoplifters and the like) to terms of imprisonment in a house of
correction for up to two years, with the option of hard labour. Over the course
of the nineteenth century, imprisonment became the major form of secondary
punishment for all felonies. Necessarily, the prison system expanded, and the
modern prison we know today was born. Wandsworth House of Correction
was conceived amidst this penal development. It opened in 1851, and housed
prisoners facing short-term sentences.

The Prison Commission series for the Surrey House of Correction in
Wandsworth commences at Volume 230 in 1858 and runs through
uninterrupted to Volume 289 in 1878. There are approaching 100,000 prisoners
documented. Throughout the series the heights and weights of men are
recorded. From January 1866 women's heights and weights were also
measured and recorded. Heights were measured in feet and inches, mainly to
the half inch but with a small proportion to the quarter inch. Weights were
measured in stones and pounds. Outgoing weight was not consistently
recorded, but incoming weight was.\(^1\) Different rules governed our collection
of data on males and females, due to the completeness of the data and
differences in their incarceration rates. Males were sampled to include the
years 1858 and 1859 (the earliest records with weight), 1866, and 1878, yielding
a sample of 13,301. All females were collected, from the earliest recording of
weight in 1866 through to the end of the series in 1878. This created a data set
of 19,569 females. Information was collected on age, height, incoming weight,
pockmarks, occupations, literacy, religion, country of birth, registration
number, date of custody, and date and registration number of last conviction
where relevant. In a sub-set of 1907 cases, more detailed information was also
gathered on crime, type of offence (felony or misdemeanour) and punishment,
and exit weight was collected in 1528 cases. In addition, repeat offenders
provide a longitudinal dataset on 5,700 women prisoners.\(^2\)

A return of the number of prisoners received at the House of Correction, Wandsworth
Common, during the year ending 29th September, 1861 offers some insight into who
was incarcerated in the Surrey House of Correction.\(^2\) In that year, some 2,764
males were imprisoned at Wandsworth, 44 per cent under 21 years of age.
There were also 1,261 females, 28 per cent aged under 21 years. About half the
females were first offenders, as were three quarters of the males. Both men and
women were in the main misdemeanants, a smaller portion were felons, and
some were vagrants.

Comparison with the information on crime collected for our sub-set of
prisoners shows that seven in ten women were first offenders. Misdemeanours
counted for around one half of women and even more men. About one fifth
were guilty of felonies, and three-in-ten of crimes associated with vagrancy
and vagabondage. The single most popular offence for women was being
drunk and riotous with over 30 per cent of women being imprisoned for being
drunk. Exactly 35 per cent of the women were admitted for just seven days or
less; half that proportion for 14 days, 8 per cent for 21 days, one-tenth for one
month, with diminishing proportions thereafter. On the whole men were
rogues and vagabonds (24 per cent), vagrants (21 per cent), and thieves (18 per
cent). Sentences were slightly heavier than for women; fewer were in for just
seven days (20 per cent), but most were in for a few weeks, or one, two or three months. Just 15 per cent were in for longer. Men were incarcerated for an average of 67 days and women for 50.

The age distribution of prisoners shows that the criminal justice system drew into prison everyone from a seven year-old English boy through to an 89 year-old woman who had been born at sea, but there is support for the notion of the masculinity of juvenile delinquency in England. While 10 per cent of English females were aged 18 years or less, this category accounted for a substantial 26 per cent of English males. Many Irish emigrants to London were to be found in Wandsworth House of Correction. Irish men and women were more mature than their English counterparts, with median ages of 32 and 38 years respectively, while their English compatriots had median ages of 23 and 30 years.

Occupational data from the 1861 Census shows men living in the area of Wandsworth to be predominantly classified as occupied in manufacturing (20 per cent), building (16 per cent), dealing (13 per cent), agriculture and farming (10 per cent), general labour, public and domestic service (each at around 9 per cent) and transport and storage (7 per cent). Male prisoners were disproportionately drawn from the labouring category (46 per cent of the English, 66 per cent of the Irish). Half of women recorded by the census enumerators were classified as ‘unwaged and indefinite’, and some 30 per cent of English and Irish prisoners also fell into this category. Women identified as working were overwhelmingly domestics in all categories. Wandsworth prison housed the rough and rowdy end of the working class, many the working poor.

Results

It is instructive to compare the heights and body masses of the nineteenth-century prisoners with the population today using results from the Health Survey for England 2003. The most notable difference between the historical and contemporary populations is the absolute difference in heights (over three inches for females, and nearly four inches for males) and the delay in reaching physical maturity in the nineteenth century, especially among boys. Delayed maturity is suggestive of childhood deprivation followed by improved opportunities as adulthood approached.

In England today there is little to distinguish between the mean body mass of adult men and women. Among those aged 16 years and over, the 2001 Health Survey for England found that women have a mean body mass of 26.7 kg/m² and men 26.9 kg/m², both with standard errors of the mean of 0.07. Body mass increases with age, the phenomenon known as ‘middle-aged spread’, until the mid-70s when the trend reverses as aging diminishes bone density, muscle bulk and fat deposits. Men were more likely to be overweight, both sexes equally likely to be obese, and more women than men were morbidly obese, with a body mass of 40kg/m² or more.
How do the bodies of Wandsworth prisoners compare? Taking adults aged 16 and over, English women had a mean body mass of 22.3 kg/m² and men 22.5 kg/m² which would appear to replicate the modern pattern of sexual equality. However, this apparent similarity is misleading for two reasons: one, because there are comparatively few teenage girls in the study, and two, Wandsworth boys did not reach their terminal height until later in life, around 21 years of age. Restricting the age range to those over 21 does nothing to change the body mass index of women, but it does push up the mean body mass of men to 23.1 kg/m², a sizable and significant difference when compared with women of 0.8 kg. There was an even more sizeable distinction between Irish women at 21.8 kg/m² and Irish men at 23.0 kg/m². Per unit of height, women had less mass, particularly the Irish women.

The proportions ‘at risk’ by Waaler’s calculations are considerable. A full one quarter of English women, and 31.5 per cent of Irish women, had a body mass below 21 kg/m². Ten per cent of Irish men and nearly the same of English men were similarly at risk. Very few fell into the obese danger category of above 29 kg/m²: 2 per cent of English women, one per cent of Irish women and English men, and less than one per cent of Irish men. Clearly being underweight was a significant problem for this community in general, but gender and ethnicity are also important parts of the historical story.

A most striking finding is evident when we consider trends in adult body mass with age. English men in Wandsworth continued to increase body mass into their mid-30s, after which there is some variation about a fairly flat trend. Irish men, who had completed growth earlier than the English and already possessed more mass at age 20, made little gain into their mid-30s, after which there was a general decline in BMI. English women, who in their early 20s were on par with English men, suffered a steady and significant decline over their life-cycle, a trend that was even more pronounced for Irish women. This is further emphasised by taking the proportions with a body mass less than 21 kg/m² within each age group. Around one-quarter of 20 year-olds were undernourished by this measure, rising to nearly one half of English women in their 60s, and three in every five Irish women of the same age.

Further evidence of the low levels of nutrition generally received by women is revealed by the comparison of weights on entering and leaving prison, where these data are available. Prison dietaries in Wandsworth were basic and designed to be punitive. They were graded by the duration of sentence. Convicted prisoners confined for one week were expected to survive on a diet that would have killed a person interned for months or years. Most women were imprisoned for between 7 and 21 days and were allowed two pints of oatmeal gruel a day and 18 ounces of bread. Alarmingly, 60 per cent of women who were in prison for 14 days or more gained weight. Conversely 70 per cent of men lost weight on this diet supplemented with a further 6 ounces of bread per day. Women gained on average 3 pounds while men lost the same. The exceptions were boys and elderly men, who also tended to gain weight. This reflects very badly on life outside and points to very high levels of deprivation.

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A clear gender gap emerges over the life course of these poor Londoners. From their early 20s, just when English boys were catching up on some of their earlier deprivation, young women entered a less fruitful time that was to last the rest of their lives. Contemporaries observed that men needed feeding in order to work, and that children and wives went without before their menfolk went hungry. The anthropometric data fit that model. Boys and girls were undernourished, but as boys became adults their claims on food increased, and so did their heights and weights. As girls became adults and mothers they had to make hard decisions about the allocation of scarce family resources, with resultant self-sacrifice. When families grew, women shrank. At the point when children left home, taking their wages with them, and age had reduced the earning capacities of herself and her husband, women suffered even more. And if life was hard in the English household, it was even more difficult for the Irish who had crossed the sea to London.

Conclusion

The analysis of the Wandsworth prison data has shown that the problem of underweightness was shaped by both gender and ethnicity, and that the wasting of women increased over the life cycle. We can offer tentative explanations as to what might underlie these observations. One possibility is that household resources were distributed unevenly in favour of men and, possibly, children and younger women, but that the older a woman was, the less she received. She may have been less successful at bargaining within the household or, as the person dishing out the food, she might have made the noble decision to favour others above her own needs. Another is that these women were not part of families and instead were single or widowed and dependent on their own earnings. Women’s wages were low and work was often irregular which would leave such women vulnerable to poor nutrition and the consequent effects on weight and health. A third possibility is that the ageing process was accelerated among the poor of mid-Victorian London and that the experience of ageing was gendered. It is plausible that all three explanations are valid and interrelated.

Much more work needs to be done before conclusions can be reached about the meanings of the findings identified here. In particular, the relationships between different biological indicators need further exploration, with height and body mass ultimately wedded to mortality data and these related to economic circumstances. Some of the data we have collected offer the opportunity to study such links. For instance, a related dataset of 1,003 women prisoners was collected from licences for release granted between 1864 and 1884. These records contain a considerable amount of information. Height, weight and age data have been collected, as has information on family structure (marital status, number of living children), skills (occupation, ability to read and write), place of birth (usually town, county and country), place of conviction, crime, and length of sentence. Height and weight data were recorded for the whole sample on leaving prison and for a large sub-sample on entering prison. In addition, some women were repeat offenders and their files were linked with their previous records, so offering a longitudinal perspective.
Initial analysis of this data has enabled differing life-cycle profiles of BMI to be discerned by marital status, and something about the impact of local economic conditions can be inferred from place of birth and/or place of conviction. These data will allow more comprehensive tests of the links between women’s household and labour market position and their well-being, as measured anthropometrically, by correlating location with variables extracted from other sources. Analysis of the data sets for other areas, such as Paisley in Scotland, will also offer similar opportunities to investigate both gender and regional differences in experience.29

NOTES

10. Sixth World Food Survey, 3.


19. For notes on adjustments for clothing and shoes and details of how accurate the measurements taken were see S. Horrell, D. Meredith and D. Oxley ‘Measuring misery: body mass among Victorian London’s poor’, Explorations in Economic History (forthcoming). We believe prisoners were weighed without clothing and thus err towards overstatement of weight if there exists a bias in our results.

20. In only 20 cases were prior convictions recorded for men.


24. Weighted figures for 2003 from trend tables, Health Survey for England 2003: key findings, ch.6, p. 18 Anthropometric measures; the study excluded the weights of pregnant women: ch.6, p. 2. The 2004 National Diet and Nutrition Survey found mean values of 27.2 and 26.4 kg/m² respectively for men and women aged 19–64 years: tables 2.3 and 2.4 (includes Scotland and Wales).

25. This problem, if not identified, creates the impression of Irish men having greater mass than English men, as Irish men reached terminal height at an earlier age.

26. Unlike the Wandsworth women, the women for whom we have release licences were serious criminals. They were usually older, a median of 32 rather than 23 years old, and they had committed more serious crimes, from larceny to murder, and were imprisoned from between 5 years (53 per cent) and life (2.4 per cent). The mean duration of conviction was 8.64 years. However, these records provide some useful geographical and socio-economic comparisons. The women came from across the nation. They were convicted in, for instance, Middlesex, Durham, Liverpool and Worcester, among many other places: 16.5 per cent were born in London, 36.6 per cent were born in an industrial town, 20.5 per cent in a village, and most of the remainder were born in a small town, with a few born overseas. The women listed 77 different occupations: 23 per cent had no occupation. For those with an occupation popular ones were servant (8.1 per cent), charwoman (9.3 per cent), factory hand (9.7 per cent), hawker (7.7 per cent), laundress (6.8 per cent), prostitute (4 per cent), but they ranged up to professional occupations, such as a post office servant.

RESEARCH NOTE

‘THE FITNESS OF THE PERSON EMPLOYED': COMMENTS IN THE SCOTTISH CENSUS ENUMERATORS’ BOOKS

Christine Jones

Christine Jones is employed at the UK Data Archive as a research assistant. She noticed these comments in the 1851 CEBs while working on the Victorian Panel Study.

The Census Enumerators’ Books (CEBs) for use in Scotland in 1851 were designed slightly differently from those for use in England and Wales that year. On page ii, to the right of the table of ‘Summary of Totals in the Following Pages’, was a space headed ‘Remarks of the Minister of the Parish’. In the English and Welsh CEBs the tabulation was centred on the page. Although there was sufficient space in either margin for comments these were not specifically encouraged. In many of the Scottish CEBs the ‘Remarks’ space was left blank or the Minister merely certified the summary totals to be correct. However, in a few cases the Minister took the opportunity offered to express himself. In the urban districts the ‘Summary of Totals’ took up more of the page than in the rural districts, leaving less space for creative expression. Therefore most of the comments tend to come from rural parishes. The following is a selection culled from photocopies of the CEBs of the parishes included in the National Sample from the 1851 Census of Great Britain.1 These comments, together with others that might be found in the Scottish CEBs not included in the sample, give us a rare glimpse into the life of the nineteenth-century census enumerator and therefore are of great interest to local population historians. The lack of space for comment on the forms used in England and Wales does not necessarily mean that the conditions under which the enumeration took place were very different.

H. McKenzie, Minister of Moy in Inverness, wrote, ‘I have examined with care this Enumerator’s Book and believe that all the various entries made therein are quite correct’, so much for the confidentiality of the census process. In contrast David Sutherland, Minister of Farr in Sutherland, makes it clear that he only examined the population totals and the description of the boundaries, while R. Williamson, Minister of Knockbain in Ross, merely certified that he had ‘looked over certain portions of this Book and believe it to be correctly filled up’. M.C. MacKenzie, Minister of Laswade in Midlothian, after stating that he had ‘examined this Book and believe it to be correct’ added as a p.s., ‘I have also seen the other Books and I have no doubt they are also correct’. The CEB which
he signed covered only the village of Laswade. Presumably the other CEBs he referred to covered the outlying hamlets and farms.

Robert Henderson, Minister of Newton-on-Ayr, claimed, ‘from my knowledge of the person appointed to superintend the enumeration of the parish I have no doubt that the books are accurate.’ William Lamb, Minister of Carmichael in Lanark, wrote of his personal knowledge of the parish and his ‘confidence in the accuracy and fidelity of the Enumerator’. Page iv bears the signatures of John French as enumerator and John Lamb Jnr as the ‘person appointed by the Sheriff or Provost to superintend the enumeration of the Parish’. The enumeration identifies John French at Binkie School House as a ‘Teacher of English and Arithmetic’. Unfortunately it does not show either William or John Lamb. A similar testimonial came from J. A. Allan, Minister of Loudoun in Ayr, who wrote, ‘from my own inspection, as well as Mr Campbell’s well known accuracy in such matters, in the fitness of the person employed by him as Enumerator, I am satisfied that the Census is accurately taken’. Page iv bears the signatures of Andrew Campbell as the superintendent and Andrew Campbell Jn. as the enumerator.

William Mersson, Minister of Crail in Fife, is fulsome in his praise, stating, ‘Having examined the 19 pages of this book, I have much pleasure in stating that I believe it to be accurately and faithfully made up’, but had he spotted the entry at the bottom of page 2 for Charlotte Henderson whose ‘Rank, Profession or Occupation’ is described as ‘Fatuous and Bed-rid’? Robert Sandey, Minister of Tudergarth in Dumfries, noted ‘there are a few orthographical slips in the following pages but they do not affect the correctness of the account of the population’. Those who have struggled with the transcription of CEBs may have noted that ‘orthographical slips’ are rather common. George Gillespie, Minister of Cummertrees in Dumfries, having certified that he had examined the enumeration and considered it to be accurately taken, added that ‘the condition and occupations of the inhabitants are also correct’.

Adam Corbet, Minister of Drumoak in Kincardine, evidently kept his own list of parishioners for pastoral purposes. He wrote, ‘I have compared the principal statistics contained in this book with my own private list and have found them substantially correct’. William Dill, Minister of Colmonell in Ayr, similarly compared the enumeration of Gilbert Rawan with his ‘own parish census, and found it very accurate’. Robert Stewart, Minister of Strontian, part of the parish of Ardnamurchan in Argyle, claimed he could ‘discover no inaccuracies’. David Martin, Minister of Strachen in Kincardine, was less confident of the accuracy of the enumeration. He wrote that he found ‘their contents to be as correct as possible’.

L. Grant, Minister of Boyndie in Banff, in addition to being satisfied that the enumeration was correct, wrote, ‘There seems to be an increase in the population of the village of Whitehills, which may be accounted for by houses being built since the date of last census, and also from every house being at present occupied’. A Cushing, Minister of Rayne in Aberdeen, wrote, ‘The number of Inhabitants in this district is little different from that in 1841:- But the number of vagrants and beggars in it, lodged with the farmers, is
remarkable – being 17/- an oppressive burden on the parish’. The total number of people enumerated in this district was 330 in 59 houses.

Some ministers would have had a more arduous task than others. Donald McConnochie, Minister of Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Inverness, wrote, ‘I have examined the fifteen enumeration Books of this Parish and have every reason to believe in the accuracy of the details therein set forth’. While parishes were extensive in area they were often sparsely populated and the CEB from this parish drawn in the sample contained only 60 records. Some enumerators had more arduous tasks than others. The Minister of Contin, Wester Ross, wrote, ‘In this district a large majority of the residents being unable to fill up the Schedules, the schoolmaster found himself unable to undertake the execution of them until 1st April’. In addition to the settled inhabitants the enumerator found 20 persons ‘engaged in planting and enclosing a plantation’.

In the parish of Kirkmichael in Banff one extra male was temporarily present to attend the Sheriff’s Court. In other parishes males and some females were temporarily absent engaged in fishing. Two females and 14 males were absent from Aberdour in Aberdeen. In the parish of Kirkcolm in Wigtown John Wright, the enumerator, noted two males temporarily absent from the district and commented, ‘Two young men who went to seek births [sic] in ships but not finding them have since returned to their native place.’ In the parish of Roskeen, Ross W. Tallack, the enumerator, noted 104 males and 9 females who were temporary residents and attributed them to the ‘improvements of Land and Public Works carried out at Ardross’. However, the Superintendent, Alexander Ray, remarked that, ‘for the 4 or 5 years past during which the Ardross improvements have been going on, the number of men employed there has been much more than that’. James McFarlan, Minister of Muiravonside, Stirling, stated he had ‘reason to believe that the population of Linlithgow Bridge and of the parish eastward of the canal is nearly doubled by the number of persons employed in making the railway’. George Ritch, the enumerator, recorded 72 temporary residents (64 male and 8 female) engaged in the construction of the railway.

John Matteson, who supervised the enumeration of the parish of Kilmuir on Skye, added a comment to that of the Minister, which is difficult to decipher, but is an attempt to explain the use of the term ‘agricultural labourer’. They were cottars holding no land as tenants but getting occasional employment from the little arable land to produce crops for their neighbours. He also wrote that the number of arable acres that farmers held had been inserted in the CEB but that the number of acres of pasture land could not be accurately ascertained.

James Gardiner, Minister of Rathven in Banff, wrote, ‘The population is chiefly composed of wealthy farmers and small crofters, active and persevering, and well educated, and regular in their attendance on divine ordinances. The whole district is a short distance from the parish church, and accommodates an excellent school and a zealous and able teacher’. On page 21 of the CEB the parish schoolmaster appears as John Russell, aged 23, with his elder sister and two younger brothers.
Neilston in Renfrew was a densely populated area. The Minister wrote cautiously, ‘I have examined the returns of this Book and find they are likely to be accurate. The number of inhabited houses has decreased by 8 since last Census while the population has increased by 450. The increase of population ascribed to the enlargement of former works in the neighbourhood and also to a small degree to the building of new ones. The return shows 22 inhabitants as the average of each house. Majority of the houses consist of several flats’.

Roderick McLean, Minister of South Uist wrote, ‘In this District there is an increase of 50 since the year 1841. Few or none of the Inhabitants emigrated since 1841, and a family of Cottars being located among them since that period’. This was despite the enumerator’s comment that the district ‘contains about 532 acres of arable land, the soil is mostly arable and under cultivation. It is partly sandy, partly moss, but chiefly a mixture of both, but frequently very thin and rocky’.

John Cameron, enumerator of Morven in Argyle, sounds somewhat aggrieved by the terrain of his district. He wrote, ‘The inhabitation is chiefly on the Lochaline side, but there are 4 families, two resident in the interior and 2 of them on the sea coast, so far apart as to render this, specially from the rugged character of it, one of the most difficult districts of the Parish to overtake in the time prescribed’.

Robert Fagga, enumerator of St Madoes in Perth, wrote additional comments on the page for the description and boundary of the enumeration district and on the pages of enumeration: ‘Of the 71 male adults (reckoning from the age of 14) of this District, the distribution is as follows: 31 employed in purely agricultural operations; 20 as General Labourers; the Fishers being occasionally Spademen, and Weaving being only the resource of both the classes when outdoor employment cannot be had. Of the remaining 10, there are only 4 who have nothing to do with land. The District is therefore to be accounted strictly agricultural. The entire population of the parish land including Squire Men and Schoolmaster have (one or two trifling exceptions) no other recognized source of income than the production of the territory on which they live.’ But what about the unrecognised sources of income? Pitfour Orchard was a croft of 9 acres occupied by 3 spinster sisters aged 46 to 58. The enumerator commented, ‘This croft is entirely cultivated and managed by the Occupants – an admirable specimen of our Countrywomen. Constrained by situation to exercise masculine employments, they have always maintained in an eminent degree of delicacy and propriety becoming their sex.’

The photocopy of the CEB for part of the parish of Old Luce, Wigtown, includes attached to page v a statement signed by the JP that, ‘the following enumerators appeared before me this day and produced their Enumeration Books and Householders Schedules belonging to their respective districts of the parish and village of Old Luce and declared the same to be correct to the best of their knowledge’. The list includes name, residence and also occupation. They were a farmer, a farmer’s son, a merchant’s clerk, a fisherman, an assistant teacher, a smith and two masons. There is a similar statement attached to the photocopy of the CEB for the parish of Sorbie, Wigtown. The enumerators were
the inspector of the poor for the parish, the parish schoolmaster and another
teacher, an innkeeper and three farmers. All, it is stated, ‘being solemnly sworn
and interrogated deponed that they have faithfully and to the best of their
knowledge and belief discharged the duties devolving on them as
Enumerators ... and that the Books handed in by them are true Copies of the
Returns furnished them by the Householders. All which is truth as the
deponents shall answer to God.’ Two of the farmers were surnamed Broadfoot,
as was the Justice of the Peace.

The longest comment is that by the Minister of the parish of Delting, the
northernmost part of the main island of Shetland. John McIntyre wrote, ‘Many
of the people of this district [Quam] are 3 to 4 miles distant from the parish
church at Olnaforth; they are a little nearer the School at Susister [sic] endowed
by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and have no other School
or church accommodation nearer at hand. The potatoe [sic] disease a blessing
to Fetlar (?) [Fetlar is an island beyond the island of Yell from Delting]. At the
time that this disease began to commit its ravages the people were sunk almost
as deeply in misery as possible. They had been completely overlooked in their
remote and dreary wilderness by the British legislature who like the Gods of
Greece and Rome were too exalted to regard the appearance of a people so low
in the social scale or who perhaps were too much occupied in the laudable
endeavour to rival in the Senate the matchless eloquence of the Ancients, or it
might be were too busy in rearing by means of liberal endowments a
numerous race of sturdy Paupers and of bold Papists Providence in its wrath
or in its mercy sent this potatoe [sic] disease which would have made speedy
work in its destructive progress had not the Christian liberality of the people of
Scotland been stirred up to help. The consequence has been that goods roads to
a considerable extent have been made through the impassable north of Zetland
and the people have been enabled by the charity of strangers to attain the first
step of civilization and comfort’.

The comments by the Minister of the parish of Linlithgow were written in CEB
6, which was not drawn in the sample. However, in CEB 7 there is a lengthy
response from William Shiells, the superintendent: ‘In reference to the
Remarks of the Clergyman of the Parish as given in Enumeration Book 6 of the
Burgh I beg to state:

1. That he uses Royal Burgh instead of Parliamentary Burgh.

2. That he stated in explanation that his strictures applied chiefly to
the landward part of the Parish beyond the Parliamentary
boundary and not within my superintendence.

3. That I minutely scrutinized the information as to every house,
occupier male and female and that I believe the results as
contained in the summaries of the 7 books to be perfect as to
these particulars.

4. That I believe the miscellaneous information as to “pauper,
occupation, etc” approaches as nearly as possible to perfect
accuracy.
The same day John Hardy, the Provost, signed the declaration that the enumeration of the Burgh had been duly performed and that ‘no inaccuracies have been discovered therein which have not been duly corrected, as far as has been possible’.

These comments illustrate the diligence of enumerators, superintendents and clergy in carrying out the enumeration process. They show that in many cases the clergy knew their parishioners well and respected the local enumerators. They also show some of the difficulties of enumeration in both densely and sparsely populated districts and the added problems of difficult terrain and illiterate householders. Finally, they reveal too that at times there were tensions between the clergy and both local and national governments.

NOTE

1. Anderson, M. et al., National Sample from the 1851 Census of Great Britain [computer file]. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], 1979. SN: 1316. The comments described in this research note are not included in the dataset or in its documentation.
ELECTRONIC RESOURCES FOR LOCAL POPULATION STUDIES

DEMOGRAPHIC PROCESSES IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 1851–1911: DATA AND MODEL ESTIMATES

Dov Friedlander and Barbara S. Okun

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Introduction

Recently, we have deposited a newly available data source entitled ‘Demographic Processes in England and Wales, 1851–1911: Data and Model Estimates’ with AHDS History at the UK Data Archive (Study Number 5587). The relevant link, with full documentation, is http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=5587

This source includes data for 578 registration districts of England and Wales which were compiled and digitised from two primary sources, both published by H.M.S.O: (1) printed volumes of the Censuses of England and Wales, which were administered every decade during the period from 1841 to 1911; and (2) printed reports of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England and Wales, various volumes between 1851 and 1911. The data contains a wide variety of demographic and socio-economic information for the period in question, which we believe would be of value and interest to local population historians. In particular, the data is presented in a way which facilitates the study of socio-economic and demographic change over time and across districts. Demographic topics covered include fertility, nuptiality, marital fertility, mortality and migration, as well as composition of the population by age, sex and marital status. In addition, other topics included are socio-economic characteristics of registration districts, such as occupational distributions and indicators of educational levels.

From census materials we obtained, for each registration district within each county (excluding London), demographic and socio-economic data, including...
such items as population figures, marital status of the population, and occupational distributions. The reports of the Registrar General provided information such as births, marriages, and deaths for each registration district for the inter-censal periods. The combined information from the census volumes and the reports of the Registrar General allowed for the computation of various demographic rates and indices, such as measures of marital fertility rates, nuptiality, overall fertility, life expectancy, and many more. Many of the measures are available for all census or inter-censal periods; others are available for selected periods only. In some cases, demographic and statistical models were employed to estimate key measures and indicators of demographic change. For example, net migration rates were derived from differences between inter-censal population growth rates and inter-censal rates of natural increase. The great majority of the data and estimates were compiled and computed at the registration district level for the period 1851-1911.

The district-level data is available in a variety of formats, as described below. Among them is a form of district profiles, which we believe will be especially convenient for use by local historians. In addition to the district-level data, decennial inter-county migration flows were estimated for each inter-censal decennial period from 1851 through to 1911. The model used to estimate inter-county migration streams is based on cross tabulations of county-level distributions of populations born in, and enumerated in, each of the censuses.

Contents of the site

England and Wales District Variable File, 1851–1911

The district file (an SPSS data file entitled england_wales_disvar_1851_1911.sav) contains data on 578 registration districts in England and Wales from 1841 to 1911. The file thus includes information on populations in all registration districts of England and Wales, with the exception of populations in London districts. All efforts were made to maintain consistency over time in district definitions.

For each district, the file contains values for 233 variables; variable labels are included in the file and references to published materials which provide further information on variable definitions are also given where necessary. In addition, a file entitled ‘Guide’ provides more detailed explanations of some variable definitions and derivations.

Figure 1 is illustrative of an excerpt of the District Variable File, and highlights certain variable values for 11 districts in Surrey. Each line in the file refers to a different district. District names have been shortened for convenience. For full names of districts, as well as changes over time in district definitions and boundaries, the user can see an Excel data file called ‘district_names’.

Many of the variables provide a time series of values for the same measure. For example, in Figure 1 we present six different values for implied male and female net migration rates per 1,000 per year at ages 15–44. The six different values refer to rates for the six consecutive decennial periods 1851–1860.
Figure 1  Excerpt from district variable file

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<tr>
<th>district</th>
<th>m@fmig06</th>
<th>m@fmig07</th>
<th>m@fmig08</th>
<th>m@fmig09</th>
<th>m@fmig10</th>
<th>m@fmig11</th>
<th>urbdist</th>
<th>more_vars</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>2.00</td>
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<td>28.80</td>
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<td>10.20</td>
<td>9.80</td>
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<td>14 -</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

through 1901–1911 (m@fmig06 through m@fmig11). For each district, urban distance (urbdist) is also provided: this is an index which captures the weighted distance from large towns/cities (closest=100).

Other variables which may be of particular interest (not presented in the illustration in Figure 1) include a time series of measures of population density; various measures of fertility levels over time, including Coale’s indices; characteristics of fertility transition processes, including indirect indicators of the use of fertility control; a time series of estimates of life expectancy and child mortality rates at ages 0-4; a time series of measures of literacy for men and women separately; and a time series of occupational distributions, including detail on proportions of the adult male populations employed in professional, commercial, industrial, textile, mining, domestic service and agriculture.

England and Wales district profiles

Fifty-two Excel spreadsheets present a selection of the district-level variables included in the District Variable File (see above). The districts are organised into 52 counties, with each spreadsheet containing the district-level information for each district in one county. File names refer to the relevant county. For example, the file containing district-level profiles in Surrey is called Surrey.xls. The format of these district profiles is particularly convenient for those interested in local history.

Figure 2 presents an example of one such district profile, for Epsom, Surrey (one of the 578 registration districts included in the District Variable File). Each district profile is divided into an upper and lower section, which are separated from each other by a thick black line. The upper section provides period-specific information, for a series of time frames, indicated by column headings. The lower section also provides period-specific information, but the periods do
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>1841–50</th>
<th>1851–60</th>
<th>1861–70</th>
<th>1871–80</th>
<th>1881–90</th>
<th>1891–10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean population</td>
<td>18144</td>
<td>20724</td>
<td>26350</td>
<td>35699</td>
<td>45615</td>
<td>56072</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net migration rate</td>
<td>-2.70</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>8.90</td>
<td>26.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. females per males, ages 15-44</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Women ever married, age 20-24</td>
<td>22.40</td>
<td>24.80</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>12.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coale nuptiality index IM</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital fertility index IG</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total fertility rate</td>
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<td>4.20</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Grooms unable sign name at marriage</td>
<td>29.20</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>11.40</td>
<td>9.80</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Brides unable sign name at marriage</td>
<td>13.90</td>
<td>11.90</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.90</td>
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<td>Life expectancy at birth*</td>
<td>45.30</td>
<td>48.10</td>
<td>47.40</td>
<td>47.40</td>
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<td>Fertility transition characteristics**</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>(c)0.82</td>
<td>(d)1897</td>
<td>(e)0.58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Death rate age 0-4***</td>
<td>(a)45.84</td>
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<td>(c)42.44</td>
<td>(d)39.24</td>
<td>(e)36.78</td>
<td>(f)34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Male LF in select. occup. 1861****</td>
<td>(a)6.9</td>
<td>(b)6.7</td>
<td>(c)21.7</td>
<td>(d)4.7</td>
<td>(e)5.2</td>
<td>(f)3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Male LF in select. occup. 1871****</td>
<td>(a)7.1</td>
<td>(b)9.1</td>
<td>(c)25.6</td>
<td>(d)4.4</td>
<td>(e)5.1</td>
<td>(f)27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Male LF in select. occup. 1881****</td>
<td>(a)6.43</td>
<td>(b)11.17</td>
<td>(c)27.15</td>
<td>(d)3.46</td>
<td>(e)6.5</td>
<td>(f)22.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Female LF in select. occup. 1871****</td>
<td>(a)4.7</td>
<td>(b)0.4</td>
<td>(c)1.5</td>
<td>(d)8.1</td>
<td>(e)21.1</td>
<td>(f)1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Life expectancies are based on indirect standardization, using the English age-specific mortality rates as standards.
** These indices do not relate to the time periods indicated above. (a) Is the mean value of pre-transition marital fertility IG levels over the period 1841 to t1, the year of onset of the transition. (b) Is the estimated year of onset of the transition t1. (c) Is the estimated IG value at year t1. (d) Is the estimated year t2 of the end of the transition. (e) Is the estimated IG value at year t2. (f) Is the percentage mean rate of fertility decline between t1 and t2.
*** These rates do not relate to the time periods indicated above. (a) is the percentage of female labor force in professional occupations. (b) is the female percentage in commerce. (c) The percentage of females in industry. (d) The percentage of females in textiles. (e) The percentage of females in domestic occupations. (f) The percentage of females engaged mainly in household duties.
**** These percentages do not relate to the time periods indicated above. (a) is the percentage of female labor force in professional occupations. (b) is the female percentage in commerce. (c) The percentage of females in industry. (d) The percentage of females in textiles. (e) The percentage of females in domestic occupations. (f) The percentage of females engaged mainly in household duties.
not conform to the column headings (see asterisked information following the district profile for further details). Users can also refer to the ‘Guide’ file for further information.

**England and Wales: age, sex, and marital status distributions, 1851–1911**

We present a set of district-level information on population by age and sex and, where available, by current marital status, as reported in census publications for the years 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901 and 1911. This information is contained in the SPSS file england_wales_agesex_mar_dis_1851_1911.sav. Current marital status information is available for certain age groups of women only, with the exception of 1901, where estimates are not computerised.

For numbers of women currently married in 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891, information on age and marital status distributions was taken directly from reported census data. Detailed age-specific information was not available in 1851, 1901 and 1911. Numbers of married women by 5– or 10– year age group were estimated for the years 1851 and 1911, using an iterative process, from county-level information on married women by age together with district-level information on total numbers married at ages 20 and above, and 15–44 respectively, as a first approximation. Further file information, including details about age groups, is available in the pdf document entitled ‘Guide’.

Figure 3 presents an excerpt from the Age, Sex, Marital Status Distribution file. Each line represents one of the 578 registration districts. Again, for complete district names and boundary changes, see the file ‘district_names’. The figure presents numbers of females in selected age groups, as well as numbers of currently married females in selected age groups, for the districts of Surrey in 1851. For example, fm.00.51 reports the number of females aged 0–4, and fm.95.51 reports the number of females aged 95 and above. The variable mr.15.51 reports the number of currently married women aged 15–19, and the variable mr.55.51 reports the number of currently married women aged 55–64. Numbers of males, by age group, are also available, but marital status distributions of males are not included in the file.

**England and Wales inter-county migration files**

A set of six SPSS data files contain information on net and gross inter-county migration streams for each of the six decennial periods from 1851–1861 through 1901–1911. For example, the file which refers to the period 1851–1861 is entitled england_wales_intercount_migration_1851_1861.sav. Each file contains information on gross and net migration flows between pairs of counties. Because there are 53 total counties (including London), migration flows are recorded for each of the 2,756 (53 x 52) pairs.

The model used to estimate inter-county migration streams is based on cross tabulations of county-level distributions of populations born in and enumerated in each of the various censuses. Regarding information on gross and net migration streams between counties, the user should be aware that streams between
**Figure 3 Excerpt from age-sex marital status distributions**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>district</th>
<th>fm.00.51</th>
<th>fm.05.51</th>
<th>more_ages</th>
<th>fm.95.51</th>
<th>mr.15.51</th>
<th>mr.20.51</th>
<th>other_ages</th>
<th>mr.55.51</th>
<th>more_var</th>
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<td>1 SURREPSOM</td>
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<td>1013</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>199</td>
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<td>560</td>
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<td>2 SURRECHERTSEY</td>
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<td>909</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>3 SURREGUILDFORD</td>
<td>1602</td>
<td>1473</td>
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<td>296</td>
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<td>adjacent</td>
<td>distance</td>
<td>n_a_to_b</td>
<td>g_a_to_b</td>
<td>g_b_to_a</td>
<td>reside a</td>
<td>reside b</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LONDON</td>
<td>BEDFORDSHIRE</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3020</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>3779</td>
<td>2175369</td>
<td>128897</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>
adjacent counties may include short- as well as longer-distance migrations, whereas streams between non-adjacent counties are usually longer distance.

In addition to the estimates of county-level migration streams, we provide in the relevant computer files county-specific population totals of individuals born in England or Wales and enumerated in England or Wales at census dates. That is, we provide for each county the total numbers of persons in residence in each county in each census, regardless of county of birth. The term ‘in residence’ is used, although this, in fact, should be understood as ‘place where enumerated’. In the article by Friedlander and Roshier (see fn 4), the authors utilised this type of county-level population total in their estimates of various indices of migration, which relate migration streams to population bases, for purposes of standardisation. Note that there are small numbers of persons enumerated in each census for whom exact county of birth is unknown, or who were born abroad. Such individuals are omitted from population counts.

Figure 4 presents an excerpt of inter-county migration streams during the period 1851–1861. For example, the first line refers to migration streams from London to Surrey. The variable ‘adjacent’ indicates that these two counties are physically contiguous. The variable ‘distance’ indicates the air distance in miles between the centres of gravity of the two counties. Regarding information on distances between counties, these distances are not very meaningful in the context of adjacent counties.

The variable ‘n_a_to_b’ represents the estimated net migration flow from a (London) to b (Surrey), 1851–1861. Negative values indicate net outflow from a to b. Positive values indicate net flow into a from b. The variable ‘g_a_to_b’ represents the estimated gross migration flow from a to b, 1851–1861. The variable ‘g_b_to_a’ represents estimated gross migration flows from b to a, 1851–1861. The variable ‘reside a’ represents population in residence in county a, according to the 1851 census, regardless of county of birth. The analogous information for county b is represented in ‘reside b’.

Summary

Those interested in analyses of population processes in the districts in England and Wales should direct their attention to the District Variable File. A number of published articles have relied on this data (for a complete list, see the pdf file entitled ‘Guide’). Whoever is interested in specific districts, counties or regions may find the district profiles more convenient to use. In addition, researchers whose focus is on historical inter-county migration streams will also find this information available. Overall, this electronic resource makes accessible a large and diverse set of historical census and vital registration data, as well as many quantitative variables, estimated from demographic and statistical models, which shed light on important demographic transformations and which are not otherwise available in any published source.
NOTES

1. Contact e-mail addresses for Dov Friedlander and Barbara Okun are, respectively, dov.fri@vms.huji.ac.il and bsokun@vms.huji.ac.il. The postal address for both is Faculty of Social Sciences, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mt. Scopus Campus, 91905 Jerusalem, Israel.

2. The clearest explanation of how to calculate these rates is in R. Woods, Population analysis in geography (Harlow, 1979), 118–20. For a good demonstration of their use see A. Armstrong, The population of Victorian and Edwardian Norfolk (Norwich, 2000), 105–15.


SOURCES AND METHODS

This item considers a range of sources and methods commonly used in local population history. These vary in sophistication and complexity, but are intended to be of benefit to the broad LPS readership, and are accompanied by worked examples. Each item is written by an experienced population history practitioner, and will usually address both the possibilities and the pitfalls of the respective sources and methods under discussion. The LPS Board are happy to enter into correspondence on this item, which should be addressed in the first instance to the LPS General Office.

CALCULATING CRUDE BIRTH AND DEATH RATES FOR LOCAL POPULATIONS DURING THE ‘PARISH REGISTER ERA’

Andrew Hinde

The first article in this series explained that the size of the population of a given area can only change because of a small number of events, known as the components of population change. When considering whole populations, there are three of these: births, deaths and migration. That article described population change in any given locality simply in terms of numbers of events. Although numbers of events can paint a coherent picture of the nature of population change in a single place, for comparative purposes measures of the intensity of the components of population change are needed. The observation that there were 30 births in a given year in a village of 500 people would indicate a truly remarkable level of fertility, whereas 30 births in a given year in a small town of 3,000 people would indicate a very low level indeed. Measures suitable for comparing the magnitude of the fertility, mortality and migration processes of which the observed births, deaths and moves are the outcome are provided by demographic rates.

Rates can be calculated for all three components of population change, but in this article I will consider only birth and death rates. The reason for this is that, for most populations, the data required for the calculation of migration rates are not directly available, so that migration rates are estimated indirectly using methods different from those used to calculate birth and death rates.

A demographic rate is simply the ratio of the number of events to the number of people exposed to the risk of experiencing those events. That is:
rate per thousand = \frac{\text{events}}{\text{population exposed to risk}} \times 1,000

When the events are births, and the population exposed to risk is the whole population, the relevant rate is called the \textit{crude birth rate}; when the events are deaths and the population exposed to risk is the whole population, the relevant rate is called the \textit{crude death rate}. Crude birth \textit{and} death rates are often expressed per thousand of the population exposed to risk, so that:

\text{rate per thousand} = \frac{\text{events}}{\text{population exposed to risk}} \times 1,000

Many more complex rates can be calculated, such as rates specific to particular age groups, but this article will look only at crude birth and death rates.

A desirable feature of demographic rates is that the events correspond to the population exposed to risk. Correspondence may be illustrated with reference to the crude death rate. What it means is that if a person is included in the population exposed to risk then, were he or she to die within the specified period to which the rate applies, his or her death would be counted as an event; in addition, if a person is not included in the population exposed to risk, then were he or she to die within the specified period to which the rate applies, his or her death would \textit{not} be counted as an event.

It is the need to ensure correspondence that can make the calculation of accurate rates for historical populations difficult and complex. The main problem arises because the sources of data for the events (births and deaths) are usually not the same as the sources of data for the population exposed to risk. This might mean, for example, that the geographical area covered by the ‘events’ data is larger than the area to which the population data relate. If this is the case, then some events might be included which happen to persons outside the geographical area to which the population data refer, leading to an over-estimation of the rate. It is therefore important to check the boundaries of the geographical units used in each source, to make sure that they correspond. In some cases, it might be necessary to combine data for several adjacent geographical units for either events or population data in order to obtain corresponding areas for calculating the rates.

In the context of the historical population of England, then the relevant sources of data vary over time (Table 1). It turns out that the quality of the data on events and the population exposed to risk vary over time, but not in a systematic way. Before 1538 it is very difficult to obtain data on either. From 1538 onwards the advent of the Church of England parish registers of baptisms and burials makes data on the events (births and deaths) much more reliable than the data on the population exposed to risk, although the quality of the parish registers deteriorates during the eighteenth century and is questionable for the early nineteenth century. After 1801 the arrival of regular population
censuses means that the population exposed to risk presents few problems; but until 1837 we are still reliant on (often rather defective) parish registers for the events data. Only with the introduction of civil registration in 1837 do we have reliable and consistent series of data for both the events and the population at risk.

The local geographical areas for which it is conveniently possible to calculate demographic rates also vary with time. Before 1837 reliance on the Church of England registers necessitates using the (ecclesiastical) parish as the geographical unit of analysis. After 1837, the quality of the parish registers is less reliable, and certainly inferior in coverage to the civil registers. Restricted access to the latter, however, means that historians must rely on the published birth and death statistics, and the smallest unit to which these relate is the registration sub-district. The sub-district typically comprises several parishes. This paper focuses on the calculation of demographic rates for the period between 1538 and 1837, sometimes called the ‘parish register era’ because of the availability of data on baptisms and burials from the parish registers.

The calculation of demographic rates for local areas during this period can be illustrated using a specific example, that of the parish of Odiham in Hampshire, which is noted for the high quality of its parish register. It is one of the 404 parishes used in Wrigley and Schofield’s reconstruction of the aggregate population of England, and is also one of the parishes for which a full family reconstitution has been undertaken.³ Monthly totals of baptisms and burials for the entire period between 1538 and 1837 are available on a CD-ROM.⁴

For the parish register era, the estimation of the population exposed to risk is the main problem. Sources which may be used to obtain such estimates have been discussed in the previous two articles in this series.¹ In the case of Odiham it is possible to use the 1665 Hearth Tax assessment, which listed both chargeable and non-chargeable hearths, and the Bishop’s Visitations of 1725 and 1788.⁶ Multipliers for converting the assessments of the numbers of households listed in the Hearth Tax into population totals have been discussed by Tom Arkell, who suggested that a figure of 4.3 was a good working average for much of England, a figure rather lower than the mean household size of 4.5 suggested by Peter Laslett for England outside London in the late seventeenth

### Table 1
**Sources of data for the calculation of demographic rates for local populations in England and Wales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Source of data on events</th>
<th>Source of data for population at risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1538</td>
<td>Various fragmentary sources</td>
<td>Domesday book; Poll Taxes; other taxation returns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1538–1800</td>
<td>Parish registers of baptism and burials</td>
<td>Various ecclesiastical and taxation returns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800–1837</td>
<td>Parish registers of baptisms and burials</td>
<td>Census listings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837 and later</td>
<td>Civil registration data on births and deaths</td>
<td>Census listings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

92
The 1665 Hearth Tax assessment was drawn up separately for the village of Odiham and the five tythings of North Warnborough, Murrell, Rye, Stapely and Hillside, all of which fall within the parish of Odiham. Summing the numbers of households in Odiham village and the five tythings produces 162 chargeable households and 83 non-chargeable households, or 245 households in all. Applying a multiplier of 4.3 to these 245 households produces 1,054 persons, while a multiplier of 4.5 produces 1,103. Taking the mean of these two figures produces an estimated population for the parish of Odiham in 1665 of 1,080.

The number of baptisms in 1665 in Odiham parish was 30 and the number of burials was 26. However, it is usually advisable not to use a single year’s totals of births and deaths when estimating crude birth and death rates for local areas, as year-to-year fluctuations can be quite large, so that a single year’s figures may be unrepresentative. Indeed, the numbers of baptisms in Odiham in 1663, 1664, 1666 and 1667 were 26, 58, 41 and 41 respectively, so that the 1665 figure of 30 seems rather below average. Taking the average of the number of baptisms in 1665 and the two years either side gives an average number of baptisms per year in Odiham at this time of 39. Taking a similar average of the numbers of burials in each of the years 1663-1667 gives an average annual total of 29. The estimated crude birth and death rates in Odiham in 1665 are therefore:

- crude birth rate in 1665 = 39/1,080 x 1,000 = 36.1 per thousand
- crude death rate in 1665 = 29/1,080 x 1,000 = 26.9 per thousand.

According to the reply made by James Finmore, vicar of Odiham and Greywell, to the Bishop’s Visitation of 1725, the population of Odiham parish was about 1,230. In 1788 the then vicar, George Watkins, claimed that the population was “about 1,426 according to the account sent by Mr Howlett”. These two figures seem mutually compatible given what is known about population growth in eighteenth-century rural England. Using a similar approach to the baptism and burial registers (that is, taking the average numbers of baptisms and burials in 1725 and 1788 and the two years either side of those dates) gives the following estimates of the crude birth and death rates:

- crude birth rate in 1725 = 32/1,230 x 1,000 = 26.0 per thousand
- crude death rate in 1725 = 24/1,230 x 1,000 = 19.5 per thousand
- crude birth rate in 1788 = 60/1,426 x 1,000 = 42.1 per thousand
- crude death rate in 1788 = 40/1,426 x 1,000 = 28.1 per thousand.

The 1801 census of population gives the population of Odiham ‘town’ as 1,058 and that of North Warnborough ‘tything’ as 427. Totalling these gives a population for Odiham parish of 1,485, which is consistent with the total of 1,426 in the reply to the Bishop’s Visitation 13 years earlier. Table 2 shows the population of Odiham in each of the first four population censuses, together with the average number of baptisms and burials reported in the parish register for each census year and the two years on either side, and the estimates of the crude birth and death rates.
Table 2  Estimation of crude birth and death rates, Odiham parish, 1801–1831

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census year</th>
<th>Recorded population</th>
<th>Average annual no. of baptisms</th>
<th>Average annual no. of burials</th>
<th>Estimated crude birth rate (per thousand)</th>
<th>Estimated crude death rate (per thousand)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>1,485</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>2,048</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>2,413</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>2,647</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Parish registers of Odiham, available on CD-ROM from the Local Population Studies General Office, Department of Humanities, University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 9AB. E-mail: lps@herts.ac.uk; Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population tables, I. Number of the inhabitants in 1801, 1811, 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851. Vol. I, BPP 1852-53 LXXXV [1631] 60 (available on-line from www.histpop.org).

Figure 1  Estimated crude birth and death rates, Odiham parish, 1665–1835

The analysis of the evolution of crude birth and death rates for the pre-1837 era can be taken somewhat further. Since we have data on baptisms and burials for all years between 1665 and 1837, then by interpolating between the population data for the time points 1665, 1725, 1788, 1801, 1811, 1821, 1831 and 1841 we can estimate population totals for each year between 1665 and 1835, and hence estimate crude birth and death rates for the parish for each year (Figure 1).13 For simplicity, we have used linear interpolation, although exponential interpolation could also be used.14

The crude birth rate fluctuated between about 20 per thousand and 35 per thousand between 1665 and 1770, but then increased to over 40 per thousand at the end of the eighteenth century. During the first decade of the nineteenth century it fell back to around 30 per thousand. The crude death rate was slightly below the crude birth rate in most years, and gradually fell further below after about 1770, leading to a rise in the crude rate of natural increase (the crude rate of natural increase is the difference between the crude birth rate and the crude death rate). Only in a few years around 1670 and during the 1730s did natural decrease occur. It is worth noting that the crude death rate actually rose gently during the eighteenth century, but that its rise was accompanied by a rise in the crude birth rate which was at least as rapid.

Crude birth and death rates can be calculated in this way for any parish with good quality parish registers. In this context, ’good quality’ means that the baptisms and burials recorded in the registers comprise the vast majority of births and deaths which actually took place. It should be possible to use the data for any of the 404 parishes used in The population history of England 1541–1871: a reconstruction, though not all of these cover the whole 300 years of the ‘parish register era’.15 It is also possible to compare the series of crude birth and death rates for any parish with the national series calculated by Wrigley and Schofield.16

NOTES

2. There are also various statistical procedures available for ’reallocating’ events or, more usually, populations at risk from one set of geographical units to another overlapping set defined on the basis of different boundaries. See I.N. Gregory and P.S. Ell, ’Breaking the boundaries: geographical approaches to integrating 200 years of the census’, Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, series A, 168 (2005), 419–37.
4. Obtainable for a nominal charge from the Local Population Studies General Office, Department of Humanities, University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 9AB. E-mail: lps@herts.ac.uk.


8. See M. Smith ed., *Doing the duty of the parish: surveys of the Church in Hampshire, 1810*, Hampshire Record Series, 17 (Winchester, 2004), 87. In 1810 the vicar of Odiham was also responsible for the church at the nearby village of Greywell, but this was ‘a distinct parish’ according to a letter from Thomas Salmon, the then vicar, to J.H. Gell, dated 3 October 1810 (Smith, *Doing the duty of the parish*, 55).


13. We do not have numbers of baptisms and burials for the years after 1837 in the machine-readable data base (though these would be available from the original registers). Because we use average numbers of events for the two years surrounding the year to which the crude birth and death rates relate, the last year for which we can compute the rates is 1835.


15. Wrigley and Schofield, *Population history of England*. Only a minority of parishes have data extending back to 1538. Many parishes have gaps in the series, especially around the time of the Civil War and the Commonwealth period.

Unless otherwise stated, all articles reviewed were published in 2006.


The passing of the Old Age Pensions Act in 1908 inaugurated the first statutory pension payments to those aged over 70 years. In this excellent paper, Adams recounts the history of the first few years of the operation of the Act in Northamptonshire, using numerous examples. He explains that despite the fact that applicants were required to jump through various ‘hoops’ in order to demonstrate that they qualified for the payment of a pension, take-up was initially in excess of expectations. There were problems, notably the fact that although birth certificates were the obvious form of proof that a person was aged over 70 years, most potential candidates did not have one, as they were born before the introduction of civil registration in 1837. The paper also discusses the (not always easy) relationship between the poor law and the new pensions system. This was not clarified until the passing of National Insurance Act of 1911, which effectively transferred the responsibility for supporting the able-bodied (but aged) poor from the poor law to the old-age pensions administration.


This study of medieval enclosure uses a total of 65 court rolls to examine the socio-economic and demographic consequences of enclosure in Thorney, near Stowmarket in Suffolk, between 1400 and 1510. Amor describes the complex range of causes and effects that saw around half of all demesne and tenant land enclosed by the beginning of the sixteenth century.

T. Arkell, ‘Illuminations and distortions: Gregory King’s Scheme calculated for the year 1688 and the social structure of later Stuart England’, *Economic History Review*, 59, 32–69.

Sooner or later, all historians of the early modern period look to King to supply data on population levels, national income or social structure. This article forms a rare and invaluable attempt to test the veracity of King’s scheme and to examine some of the methods he deployed to derive his figures. Arkell begins by discussing the reasons why King drew up his Scheme in the first place.
Critical here was a desire to debunk some of the high population estimates proposed by some of his contemporaries. This was of more than academic interest, since King saw his revised estimates as being useful in calculating likely taxation revenues and as powerful arguments against war (the nation was neither as populous nor as rich as it was perceived to be, making war a risky business). The article then goes on to examine the evolutionary process through which the Scheme passed before the final estimates were published, and the various sources that King drew upon to derive his figures. This reveals that the Scheme underwent constant revision, with some of the figures changing considerably over time. This, then, leads Arkell to question the accuracy of the various elements of King’s Scheme. He concludes that the overall population estimate is about right; that national income was probably a little higher than King believed; that the figures for household size were not very accurate; and that the social hierarchy was a ‘crude and backward-looking stereotype based on too many guesses’ (p. 32). Given this, it is advisable that anyone thinking of using King’s Scheme in their own research should first read this article.


This paper describes the genesis and passage through parliament of the 1813 Act for the better regulating, and preserving of Parish and Other Registers of Births, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials in England, an Act which led, among other things, to the introduction of printed forms for Church of England registers. Basten shows that the Act as eventually passed was a much watered-down version of Rose’s original Bill. He goes through the numerous objections raised by Anglican clergy to the Bill, including complaints about the additional workload, the perceived discrimination in favour of Dissenters (the new law was to be optional for the latter, but Anglican clergy were to be required to collect information about Dissenters within their own parishes), and the unnecessarily intrusive nature of the questions that clergy would be obliged to ask of their parishioners.


This short note describes a number of private charities set up in the towns and villages of Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire to provide assistance to women around the time of the birth of their children, typically by loaning child-bed linen or providing midwifery services.


There have been a number of recent articles dealing with railway navigators and other itinerant construction workers in the nineteenth and early twentieth
centuries (see those by Wood reviewed in *Local Population Studies*, 73 (2004), 103–4). These two papers both deal with the experience of building projects in north Derbyshire.

Bevan’s paper should really be entitled ‘Village of the damming’, as it is about the men who worked to construct the dams of the Derwent and Howden reservoirs to the west of Sheffield. Between 1901 and 1912 these men (and their families, if they were married) were housed in a temporary village called Birchinlee, which, because it was largely constructed of corrugated metal sheets, was known as the ‘Tin Town’. The paper describes the population and social structure of this settlement, and includes an interesting discussion of how the form of the village and the location and nature of its public buildings reflected Edwardian establishment notions of the ‘ideal’ village.

In his paper, Leivers describes the origins and characteristics of the workers who built the Dore and Chinley railway line (which still runs west from Sheffield towards Manchester) between 1888 and 1894. He makes use of the census enumerators’ books for 1891 to find the navvies, and attempts to trace them in the censuses of 1881 and 1901 (an exercise which proves rather more difficult than he had anticipated because of the rather haphazard way in which navvies were enumerated in 1891). His results show that about one third of the navvies employed on the Dore and Chinley railway were born in the east Midlands, with substantial minorities from the south east and south west of England (those in the last group often employed as tunnellers, a task for which men from the south west had developed a reputation). The paper also considers the accommodation arrangements of the navvies, and notes that quite a high proportion of them lived with their families: the stereotypical hard-drinking single male navvy was by no means universal.


Black provides a useful introduction to the relationship between civilians and the military in early modern England. Whilst perhaps not an obvious topic of interest to readers of *Local Population Studies*, there is in fact much that is relevant and familiar: armies were, after all, large transient and migratory populations that could impact significantly upon their host communities. Their effect was both positive and negative: for example as purchasers and consumers of local resources, and as carriers of disease respectively. The demographic impact was potentially more enduring, as Black observes, such as the effect that the billeting of a garrison might have in terms of a subsequent increase in the number of illegitimate children born in a locality.


By comparing contemporary accounts of the relationships between young men and women in the mill towns of Yorkshire at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries with those written by Yorkshire emigrants to New England, Blewett paints a fascinating picture of the complex ways in
which female sexuality and collective female attitudes to the men in these
communities found expression. She describes courtship rituals and shows that
marriage often followed closely upon conception, and that in west Yorkshire
( unlike Lancashire), it was uncommon for married women to work in the mills
following the birth of their first child. The paper also argues that Yorkshire
emigrants to New England were not assimilated immediately, but lived in
separate villages, preferring to socialise and seek marriage partners from
within the migrant population.

87.

Between 1294 and 1334, taxes raised by parliament were typically based upon
an assessment of the value of a household’s moveable goods—those items
demed by an assessor to be surplus to the essential livelihood of the
household. Each household then paid a proportion of that value as determined
by parliament, with townsmen usually paying a tenth of the value and
countrymen a fifteenth. Taxes subsequently became known by these terms.
After 1334, however, the basis of tax collecting changed, and each village or
borough had to raise a fixed sum ( based on the value of the 1334 assessment),
though there was no direction as to how that sum should be collected.
Britnell’s analysis of two assessments from Colchester, Essex, in 1487 and 1497,
reveals how the nature of revenue raising had changed. Inferences drawn from
distribution of tax assessments suggest that in 1487 the assessment was based
on household wages, and that in 1497 the assessment was based on an
individual’s civic status, as a land or office holder. As Britnell suggests, this
shows how far the taxation system had departed from its earlier principles, the
change prefiguring reforms that have normally thought to have taken place in
the sixteenth century.

C. Brown, ‘Moving on: reflections on oral history and migrant communities in

This paper reports on an oral history investigation into the experiences of
immigrants in Leicester since the Second World War, focusing on the genesis of
the relatively harmonious relations between the many different ethnic groups
in that city. Brown also makes some general points about the use of interviews
of recent migrants, making a plea for a wider range of questions to be asked,
and especially for us to move on from asking them ‘where they came from and
why – the very same questions ... that are asked of them by immigration
officials’ (p. 80).

J. Brown, ‘Market towns and downland in Hampshire 1780–1914’, Southern
History, 28, 74–93.

As Brown notes in his introduction to this paper, historians have tended to
neglect nineteenth-century market towns, considering their experience to have
been one of unremarkable decline. Using a case study of several market towns
in the Hampshire downlands, he shows that there is more to their story than
this. Although certain activities of these market towns, such as fairs—and eventually markets—did decline inexorably, industrialisation benefited the larger market towns of the region (such as Basingstoke, Andover and Alton) by bringing new sources of employment. A consequence was that the difference between these towns and the smaller ones became more pronounced, a difference reflected in their demographic evolution.

L. Bryan, ‘Marriage and morals in the fourteenth century: the evidence of Bishop Hamo’s Register’, English Historical Review, 121, 467–86.

This article, based on the records of the consistory court of the Diocese of Rochester, 1347–48, contained in the register of Bishop Hamo de Hethe, discusses the attempts of the medieval Church to exert its control over marriage and the sexual morality of the populace of Rochester. Bryan discusses 200 or so cases of adultery, fornication, child maintenance and clerical immorality (such as priests with de facto wives), and shows the clear divergence between, on the one hand, the kinds of behaviour and actions that appear to have been an accepted part of everyday common life and yet contrary to the moral teachings of the church and, on the other hand, the strictures of canon law. Readers of Local Population Studies will find much that is familiar here. Many cases of fornication, for example, involved couples who were to all intents and purposes married. Medieval marriage was an amorphous institution, and it was in court that tensions between the official teaching of the church and popular practice came to a head. For example, there were contradictions between Aquinas’s view of marriage (that the sacrament was conferred by mutual consent), the Church’s view (that marriage should take place in facie ecclesiae) and popular custom and culture (with its multiplicity of ‘marriages’). As such, Bryan concludes that the Church’s attempt to maintain and expand its control was difficult, as the church sought to clarify its own ecclesiastical values in the face of the complexities of everyday life and the vagaries of fourteenth-century systems of gender and class.


In this article, Carrel offers a detailed analysis of a single document: the Liber Albus, a London custumal compiled in 1419 during the mayoralty of Richard Whittington. This was essentially a list of laws, but its compilation and composition reveals an attempt to construct a particular image of the city and its governance. Set in the context of the social and political disorder of the late fourteenth century, this was an attempt to portray a conservative present and an orderly future. Of particular interest to historians of local population is the treatment of food retailers. Given the responsibilities of urban governments to ensure an adequate supply of cheap and good quality food, and the poor reputation enjoyed by of food retailers, it is unsurprising that they were subjected to careful and prescriptive regulation. More generally, the article suggests the Liber Albus forms an important source of information on local custom and practice.

Using data from wills proved in England between 1585 and 1638, Clark and Hamilton demonstrate convincingly that testators who left large quantities of assets had more living children at the time of their deaths than those who left few assets. After considering and eliminating various possible ‘explanations’ for this finding (for example, selective omission of offspring from wills and wealthy testators being generally older than their poorer counterparts) they conclude that this truly reflects demographic reality, in that wealth was associated with either fertility, or with child survival, or both. By linking a subset of their probate records to parish registers, they show that age at marriage was not associated with wealth at death, which implies that if wealthy testators did have more births, this was due to higher fertility within marriage, and not to the fact that they married earlier in life. Upon reflection, though, they conclude that differential child survival, rather than differential fertility, is likely to account for most of the observed effect (and this reviewer (AH) is inclined to agree). The paper does not consider the possibility that causality might run the other way: in other words men who had many children were more likely to accumulate assets than other men. Given what we know about the direction of inter-generational wealth flows in pre-industrial England, however, this seems a rather unlikely explanation.


This article explores attitudes to land in early modern England. It begins by reviewing the literature on the so-called ‘land-family bond’ before focusing on a case study of three villages in east Sussex. Attention centres on inheritance practices, in particular the structural factors that circumscribed individual choice with respect to the inheritance of land. Drawing on a range of sources, including rentals and court books, Clarke argues that the land-family bond generally strengthened through time, especially in downland parishes. These changes were more than simply products of the variable quality of the surviving records. Rather, they resulted from the changing demographic and socio-economic context in which individual farmers were operating, with subletting, debts and manorial custom being particularly significant. These factors served to shape attitudes and behaviour towards land and land-holding.


During the early years of the Second World War, when the threat of invasion was real, local communities (parishes and towns) in Britain were asked to produce so-called ‘War Books’. These were meant to include an informal census of the local population, enumerating the inhabitants as well as identifying those who might be available for ‘heavy’ and ‘light’ work, and the number who were either infirm—unable to evacuate themselves unaided—or otherwise unable to work. Though not all places did, in the event, get round to
collecting this information before the threat of invasion receded after 1943, efforts must have been made in most places, yet almost no documentary evidence survives in the public domain. In this paper, Cohen describes one surviving example, from the contiguous parishes of Barford St John and Barford St Michael in Oxfordshire. The information collected bears a striking resemblance to that collected at the local level during the Napoleonic Wars, when there was a similar threat of invasion. Again, however, rather few of these lists appear to survive from that period: this reviewer knows of only one, which relates to the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset.


In this paper the authors address the vexed question of the reporting of attendance figures in the census of religious worship of 1851. They demonstrate that ‘rounding’ of these figures was common, and that it was especially a feature of the Anglican returns and those of ‘old dissent’ (mainly Baptists and Congregationalists). It was much less common among Methodists and almost unknown among Quakers. The impact of the rounding seems to have been that the reported figures overstated actual Anglican attendance figures by about 11 per cent, and those of ‘old dissent’ by perhaps 15 per cent. Readers are warned that the paper involves a good deal of statistical modelling. The conclusion, however, is important, as it contradicts what was generally believed at the time (especially by Anglican clergy), that the Anglican figures were understated whereas those of dissenting congregations were exaggerated.


The Local Population Studies Society’s conference in April 2007 was evidence of the growing interest in the history of the New Poor Law in England and Wales. The New Poor Law was also introduced in Ireland, and this paper makes it clear that there were substantial differences between its evolution in Ireland during the second half of the nineteenth century and its development in England and Wales. In Ireland, the prohibition on out-relief was initially applied so rigorously that in 1855 only 655 persons were receiving out-relief in the whole of Ireland (p. 542)! Yet during the remainder of the century out-relief became more and more common, so that by 1892 the corresponding figure had risen to more than 120,000. There appears to have been no ‘crusade against outdoor relief’ here, as found in England from 1870. The main beneficiaries of the increased sensitivity of the system to individual needs were women. However, there was a price to pay, which came in the form of attempts to classify paupers on moral grounds. The paper also discusses the different agendas of central and local poor law authorities. The central authorities had grand ideas of the poor law as a reforming tool, but local administrators usually just wanted to help their own poor people in as cheap and socially acceptable a way as possible.
Scottish parish registers for the period before the advent of civil registration have long been recognised as vastly inferior to their English counterparts, although recent scholarship has stressed that they can still provide useful information about the demography of that period. In this paper, Cullen uses data from 13 parishes in Lowland Scotland to assess the quality of baptism and marriage registration between 1685 and 1705. The method she uses involves calculating baptism to marriage ratios for each parish, and comparing them with the corresponding ratios for English parishes during the same period. The results produce lower ratios for Scotland than England, which probably reflects lower fertility within marriage. Another implication of Cullen’s analysis is that, overall, the registration of marriages during this period seems to have been better than has commonly been supposed (it was thought that the eviction or resignation of Episcopalian ministers from their parishes after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 resulted in a large number of clandestine or irregular marriages among Episcopalians during the ensuing decades). However, local circumstances could lead to apparent under-registration of marriages in specific parishes as, for example, when many people in a parish lived nearer to the church of a neighbouring parish than they did to their own parish church, and so had their marriages recorded in the register of the neighbouring parish. Cullen concludes that, with due care and being alert to such local conditions, historians can use Scottish parish registers to examine demographic change in the pre-registration period.

Historians of social structure are increasingly turning to the operation of the summary courts as a means of understanding the social and cultural life of past communities. It was in these courts, after all, that the plebeian population actually had most contact with formal systems of justice, and issues of crime and moral regulation formed an everyday part of the caseload of these courts. This article looks at the nature of summary jurisdiction in the City of London in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These courts operated in a way that was inevitably more complex than in the provinces, on account of the overlapping and competing institutional jurisdictions. This article presents an attempt to disentangle this complicated picture, and advances new estimate for the numbers of people committed to houses of correction between 1597 and 1854.

The history of marriage and fertility in twentieth-century Ireland traced in this article reveals a pattern of late marriage for both men and women, a high average age difference between spouses, a substantial amount of celibacy, and high fertility within marriage. This pattern was consistent with the strong opposition to birth control voiced by the Catholic Church in Ireland (strong even compared to the Catholic Church in other countries, such as England and
Wales). The outcome of this was a moderate level of overall fertility with emigration acting as a safety-valve. The marriage pattern tended to be self-reinforcing down the generations. A high age at marriage, and a tradition of husbands being substantially older than their wives, led to a large population of widows requiring support from their adult children, leading those children to delay marriage. This demographic regime did not really change until the 1960s.


Although this paper is mainly a history of the disturbances in the city of Birmingham associated with a series of lectures by the anti-Catholic William Murphy, it contains some interesting material on the numbers and locations of Irish-born people within the city taken from the 1861 census of population. Davis also shows that Birmingham’s reaction to its Irish community was no different from that of other major towns and cities in Britain.


These two papers concern the impact of social intervention in the form of health visitors on infant mortality during the first decade of the twentieth century. As is well known, infant mortality began its national decline around 1900, and the question at issue is whether the practice of visiting the homes of recently born infants and children and advising mothers on appropriate child care practices was instrumental in hastening the decline. Drake, basing his argument on evidence from Sheffield, believes that it was, and specifically that visiting the homes of the poorer classes, especially in urban areas, ensured that improved infant feeding practices and hygienic procedures were communicated to the mothers of those children most at risk. In his response, Galley, using evidence from Birmingham, points out that before 1914 the number of health visitors employed was inadequate, so that they were overworked, and that although the advice they gave was good, it took ‘time before it became fully assimilated’ (p. 74). The role of health visitors in effecting the decline of infant mortality before the beginning of World War I was, therefore, probably marginal.

C. French, ‘Taking up “the challenge of micro-history”: social conditions in Kingston upon Thames in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries’, Local Historian, 36, 17–28

Readers of Local Population Studies (LPS) will be familiar with the series of papers written by French (and co-authors such as Peter Tillott) on health and mortality in Kingston upon Thames which have been reviewed over the years in this section of the journal (see, for example, LPS 73 (2004), 84, and LPS 75 (2005), 94–5). In this contribution, French undertakes a micro-history of the
inhabitants of Fairfield Place, Kingston, between 1871 and 1901. Using multiple-source record linkage, he covers ground similar to that in the paper reviewed in *LPS* 75 (2005), though relating to a different street. This paper also includes a section considering ‘micro-history’ more generally, and stressing its role in illuminating wider historical processes.


In the late nineteenth century numerous sensationalist descriptions of the poverty and demoralisation of London’s poor appeared in print, perhaps the best known being Mearns’s pamphlet entitled ‘The bitter cry of outcast London’. In this paper, Ginn takes issue with the picture of depravity and immorality painted by this and other similar publications. He suggests that, rather than being characterised by drunkenness and sexual licence, the East End of London, at any rate, was a vast region of poor but not poverty-stricken households, the main feature of whose lives was monotony and a lack of entertainment and diversion.


There was a widespread belief in mid and late nineteenth-century England that areas where women and children were heavily involved in paid work were hotbeds of immorality and vice (the most well-known manifestation of this is perhaps the attitude towards agricultural gangs). In the first paper, Goose compares illegitimacy in those areas of Hertfordshire where straw plaiting and the making of hats employed more than half the occupied female population with illegitimacy in the rest of the county. He finds that the effect of female employment on illegitimacy differs according to the measure of illegitimacy chosen. The illegitimacy ratio (the proportion of all births which was illegitimate) was considerably higher in the straw-plaiting areas than it was elsewhere in the country, but the illegitimacy rate (illegitimate births per 1,000 unmarried women of childbearing age) was not—or at least the difference was much less, and a lot of it could be accounted for by the fact that the straw-plaiting areas were more highly urbanised. The two measures lead to different conclusions mainly because a higher proportion of women of childbearing age were unmarried in the straw-plaiting areas.

The second paper builds on a short article published in *Local Population Studies*, 72 (2004), 77–82. Goose shows that in Hertfordshire there was substantial within-county variation in the prevalence of farm service in 1851. Taking the county as a whole, farm service had declined to the extent that fewer than 10 per cent of labourers ‘lived in’. However, the practice of hiring servants survived longer in the industrialising, economically more dynamic parts of the
country than it did in arable ‘prairie’ districts. The article also includes a very useful study of the way employment in agriculture was reported in the census enumerators’ books (CEBs). Goose compares the number of persons who claimed in the ‘rank, profession or occupation’ column of the CEBs to be farm labourers with the number of labourers which farmers stated they employed. In most parishes, the former was greater than the latter (sometimes substantially greater), a fact which Goose attributes to the casual nature of much farm labour. Farmers tended to report either the number of regular labourers they employed, or the normal size of the workforce on their farms. This was usually less than the total number of different people they employed over a whole year, and less than the total number of people who claimed that their livelihood was derived from working in agriculture.


Poverty was a growing problem in sixteenth and early seventeenth century England: the result of a significant rise in population coupled with more modest economic growth. Whilst the dynamics and scope of the ‘problem’ are well established, there have been few attempts to quantify the impact of public or private philanthropy as a means of ameliorating the effects of poverty. In this article, Goose draws on a range of borough records and a huge database of probate records to explore charitable giving in Colchester during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He notes that the proportion of testators leaving gifts to the poor peaked in the early seventeenth century before declining markedly, despite the growing prosperity of the town and its leading inhabitants. Adding endowments and calculating the value of bequests modifies this picture somewhat: the money available to the poor in the 1600s was double that in the late 1500s. But this growth was somewhat illusory, since giving barely kept pace with population growth and fell well behind local economic growth. The shortfall was made up by the Corporation which became increasingly active in poor relief from the late sixteenth century. This leads Goose to argue that ‘for most Colchester testators, the problem of the poor became largely the remit of Corporation-sponsored relief, not the province of private philanthropy’, a situation which he describes as ‘the unacceptable face of mercantilism’ (p. 487).


This paper examines the relationship between age, sickness and longevity among men who were members of the Hampshire Friendly Society (HFS) during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The HFS insured its members against sickness, death and old age, keeping detailed records of the claims for sick pay submitted by its members from 1868 onwards. From 1892 onwards, these records included information about the cause of the sickness for which compensation was paid. Gorsky and his colleagues use these sickness histories to address two questions. The first concerns the relationship
between the age of the Society’s members and the nature of the claims they submitted. The results show that both the incidence and duration of periods of sickness increased with age. Older men experienced longer periods of sickness both because they experienced different types of sickness, and because it took them longer to recover from the same illnesses as those suffered by younger men. The second question is whether sickness in early adulthood was associated with increased mortality. Among a small sample of HF5 members for which detailed enough data survive, repeated bouts of sickness, as revealed by the number of claims made for sick pay, at ages under 50 years were associated with an increased risk of death at ages over 50 years. For a review of an earlier paper by the same team see *Local Population Studies*, 73 (2004), 82.


This paper analyses the role of male and female labour in households in the county of Cavan in Ireland during the early years of the nineteenth century, using surviving census returns for the census of 1821. The discussion is framed with reference to the literature on sex-specific labour supply during proto-industrialisation. The results suggest that ‘women’s labour input functioned differently in different kinds of rural industrial households ... and that this was reflected in the gender composition of [those] households’ (p. 16). Factors that were related to differences in women’s labour input were the involvement of the household in linen spinning and weaving and the size of the family’s land holding.


As a port city, the socio-economic and demographic life of Newcastle has long been shaped by its national and international travellers and immigrants. As this article shows, the Scottish influence was also significant: by 1749, for example, half of Newcastle’s keelmen were Scottish. This was a reflection of thriving Anglo-Scottish trade, and Greenhall argues that the Scots among the Newcastle population were both socially integrated and economically important (excepting, perhaps, the Scottish vagrants who also populated Newcastle’s streets).


This beautifully written and entertaining paper discusses the impact of the mid nineteenth-century cholera epidemics on the law relating to nuisances in England and Wales. Hanley shows how health concerns were used to try to amend the law to make it easier summarily to control nuisances. However, although health concerns were important, there was resistance to allowing medically qualified people to have more influence over nuisance control than any other persons. For example, the surge of interest in sanitation in Hertford in 1844 is described as “[a] collection of virtuous but inexpert men perambulating the parish and pointing out problems; there [was] ... no
sense that anything other than respectable intelligence [was] ... required to make a contribution' (p. 724).


This paper compares and contrasts demesne agriculture on two ecclesiastical estates in Hampshire: those of the Bishop of Winchester and the Cathedral Priory of Winchester. Using six selected manors from each of these two large and wealthy estates, Hare examines the extent of arable and pastoral farming, and looks at the administration of the estates. The article concludes by reflecting upon inevitable similarities between the two estates, not least due to factors related to their common geography. However, it is their contrasts that form the more interesting aspect of the study, especially in relation to the management of the estates and the differences arising from the shifting forms and needs of management between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries.


In recent years, the study of English towns in the long eighteenth century has been strongly influenced by Peter Borsay’s thesis of an urban renaissance, wherein an improvement in the urban environment is linked to a cultural and economic revival, and the growing importance of public sociability. Yet analyses of Scottish towns have been reluctant to follow this model, preferring instead to focus on industrial-based urbanisation. Harris’s article thus forms a welcome attempt to explore the idea of a Scottish urban renaissance. He focuses attention on five towns in Angus: Arbroath, Brechin, Dundee, Forfar and Montrose. He sees parallels with the situation in England, especially in terms of moves to improve the urban environment and in the development of cultural infrastructure and luxury consumption. However, Harris argues that the architectural transformation was more subtle and the timing later than was seen south of the border, although in reality it appears to coincide with a postulated second phase of English urban renaissance. More telling is the relatively small part played by the middling sorts in Scotland and his argument that the motivations for improvement were different from those in England. This pioneering work opens up as many questions as it answers: comparative work on other Scottish studies is needed to identify whether there was, indeed, a distinctive Scottish experience.


In this article the life expectancy of the monks of Durham priory is examined for evidence of shifts in mortality rates in the later middle ages. As with the monasteries in Westminster and Canterbury, the priory records indicate a dramatic drop in life expectancy in the second half of the fifteenth century. This was only partially offset by a slight recovery around the turn of the sixteenth century. The question, of course, is whether these trends are representative of the wider population. In fact, comparisons are difficult
because of the absence of contemporaneous records for the laity. Drawing on a number of demographic models, however, the authors suggest that a wider mortality crisis was the most likely cause of the stagnation in overall population seen at this time. They argue that it would have been all but impossible for birth rates to reach a level sufficient to offset the high mortality rates seen amongst monks. They also suggest that the trend in life expectancy fits with evidence of the changing numbers of probated wills during this period. More generally, this research re-opens the debate about the relationship between demographic variables, and suggests that mortality was the dominant variable at this time.


Rather than presenting new empirical work, this review essay examines the recent literature on suicide. While this is an area of growing interest, Healy argues that attention has centred primarily on changing attitudes to suicide, rather than focusing on the actions and motivations of those taking their own lives. Besides calling for more empirical work, the article identifies a number of contradictions within the prevailing trend towards more lenient attitudes: both church and state worked to exercise sanctions against suicide.


The issue as to exactly who constituted the ‘deserving’ and the ‘undeserving’ poor in early-modern England was as much a vexed issue for contemporaries as for historians who have subsequently come to study the period. And, as the historiography of the poor law has shifted towards attempting to understand the degree of agency enjoyed by the poor in terms of their relationship with parochial authorities, so has the issue of entitlement come increasingly to the fore. This paper looks at four so-called ‘technologies of identification’ that were used by parishes to try to distinguish those who had an entitlement to parochial welfare assistance from those who did not. These were the licence to beg; the vagrant’s passport; the settlement certificate; and the parish badge. Hindle looks at each in turn, showing how they were used with varying degrees of success. The value of this article is the manner in which Hindle places their usage within two important contexts: first, the socio-economic and demographic context of early-modern England, in which local and long-distance patterns of migration co-existed uneasily with what Keith Snell has called the ‘culture of local xenophobia’; and secondly, and perhaps more interestingly, the resonances that these poor law technologies have with contemporary issues of social policy. As Hindle suggests, today’s policy makers might better deal with real and perceived social problems, such as fears of benefit fraud and welfare dependency, and the apparent threat of migrants to settled communities, by placing them within their appropriate long-term historical context.

The gentry are traditionally seen as central to local administration in the medieval and early modern eras, political preferment serving to cement the social standing of individuals and families. The peculiar constitutional environment in the Palatine of Durham, wherein appointments were made by the bishop not the king, seems to have disrupted this relationship. Holford argues that office holding in the county was dominated, not by the established gentry, but by initially lower-status professionals for whom preferment was a means of social advancement. The paper deals in detail with one family of professionals who benefited in this way, drawing on a range of diocesan and personal papers. It illustrates the workings of patronage and lordship in Durham, but also serves to problematise the relationship between office holding and the gentry. It was local attitudes that were critical in the way in which the two interacted with each other.


In the (then) Yorkshire upland village of Slaidburn, sometime in the early seventeenth century, 60 acres of enclosed pasture land were allocated to be used ‘for the relief of the poor’ (p. 187). From 1740 onwards, these 60 acres became the source of a protracted legal dispute of almost Jarndyce vs Jarndyce proportions, which cascaded down the generations and was not settled until the 1840s. At issue was the definition of ‘the poor’. The leading families of the village interpreted ‘the poor’ to mean ‘those in receipt of poor relief’. This was convenient for them, as it justified their use of the income from the ‘poor pasture’ to subsidise (and hence to reduce) the poor rates. Against them was ranged a group of what we might call these days ‘hard working families’—people too poor to pay poor rates, but not poor enough to qualify for poor relief. These people argued that, although they did not routinely apply for poor relief, they could nevertheless reasonably be described as ‘poor’, and therefore deserved a share of the proceeds of the ‘poor pasture’. It was not the intention of the original grantors that the income deriving from the 60 acres should be used exclusively for the relief of paupers. The history of the dispute is both entertaining and instructive. Perhaps the most important general point to emerge is the difficulty of learning from documentary sources about the non-pauperised ‘poor’, who typically leave no trace in poor law records. In many parishes, this group of inhabitants may have been quite large.


This paper relates the story of the founding of the town of Millom in Cumbria during the 1860s as a consequence of the opening of an iron ore mine and an iron smelting works. Hughes explains that, although the mine started operations before the smelting works, the management of the mine proved incapable of organising the construction of permanent accommodation for their employees. It was left to the smelting works to construct the town, and
the layout of the streets reflected this, being orientated towards the site of the works. Only during the 1870s did the two businesses begin to cooperate effectively, and this led to a change in the geography of the town so that it focused on both the mine and the works.


Papers on the experiences of the poor under the New Poor Law are becoming more common (see, for example, those by Hurren and Hurren and King reviewed in *Local Population Studies*, 77 (2006), 87–8), and in this contribution Hunter discusses the ways in which vagrancy was treated in Yorkshire during the final three decades of the nineteenth century. The paper includes a case study of York, but draws on evidence from a wide range of poor law unions across the county of Yorkshire. The paper emphasises the variety of local responses to the ‘problem’ of vagrants, a variety which was partly determined by the extent to which local poor law authorities saw vagrancy as a manifestation of indolence and immorality, rather than the necessary consequence of a flexible labour market which encouraged people to travel in search of employment.


Despite its rather overblown title, this paper is an interesting discussion of the parish historiography of Devon, commenting on the transition from a predominantly antiquarian perspective (ancient history, the church and the big house) to an approach which more closely reflects the ‘micro-history’ exemplified by the paper by French reviewed above. This paper will be useful to any readers of *Local Population Studies* who are contemplating writing about the demographic or social history of their local area.

E. Johnson, ‘The role of family and community in the decision to emigrate: evidence from a case study of Scottish emigration to Queensland 1885–88’, *Family and Community History*, 9, 5–25.

This paper reports some of the results from an ambitions record linkage study of emigrants to Queensland from Scotland during the 1880s. The record linkage exercise starts with nominal information from passenger lists, and traces the passengers in the 1881 census enumerators’ books to establish family links and contextual information. In certain cases, information from vital records or other sources has been added to the data base. The result is a rich picture of the extent to which family connections, and occupational and other community links, helped foster emigration. There are examples of a procession of related people emigrating at intervals; other patterns include the migration of groups of redundant or underemployed workers (for example miners in Ayrshire). For reviews of other papers dealing with emigration from Scotland, see *Local Population Studies*, 75 (2005), 87–9.

Historians have long debated the timing and nature of agrarian growth in the periods preceding and during the industrial revolution, and readers of Local Population Studies may be familiar with the recent estimates and assessments of Allen, Overton, Crafts, Jackson, and Turner, Beckett and Afton (among many others). This article presents a further reappraisal of this chronology, using a new conceptual approach in terms of how historians should understand the dynamics of the pre-industrial ‘organic’ economy. As Jones suggests, much of the preceding historiography envisions the economy as two discrete sectors, agriculture and industry, and approaches the question of change by using supply and demand analysis and looking at shifts in the price terms of trade between the two sectors. This article suggests that such a dichotomy is meaningless, since in an organic economy both are so intertwined as to be part of a whole ‘agricultural world’. From this, Jones presents new estimates (or rather ‘guesstimates’) of agrarian growth. In essence, the eighteenth century witnessed increasing growth of output, with slowest growth in the period 1700–1740, a doubling (or so) between 1740 and 1780, and stagnation in the 1790s. From 1800, growth continued at an unprecedented rate. For the seventeenth century, for which data are sparser, Jones is more circumspect, but suggests the period 1650 and 1680 as one of significant growth. Understanding the relationship between agricultural change and industrialisation remains a key historiographical conundrum, but here population growth is central in explaining the chronology, with agriculture unable to release labour except during periods of demographic growth (and most obviously after 1740).


This article explores the relationship between ‘informal’ social networks and the formal structures of urban government as they played out in a variety of public and private spaces in early-modern Leicester. Drawing on about 1,000 pre-trial examinations, Kawana demonstrates the density and complexity of the social networks which revolved around the market, streets, shops and houses, and emphasises the uneasy distinction between public and private, not least in the way that social interaction moved easily between the two. In contrast, evidence drawn from the minutes of the town corporation shows how the urban authorities were primarily concerned with the construction and regulation of public space—there was little attempt to control what went on in private houses, except for a declining interest in the victualling trades. From the analysis presented here, it is not easy to see what brought together these two worlds. Clearly the actors were not mutually exclusive, but there were also movements of commodities and capital. Less apparent, but equally important, were the ways in which values and norms were transferred and interpreted.

This article tells the story of how research into population history evolved in Britain up until the establishment of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure in the 1960s. Despite the prominence of the British founding fathers of the discipline of demography (Graunt, Petty, King, Malthus and Farr), academic demography in Britain was a weak and fragile creature during this period. It lacked an institutional focus, and thus was dependent on practitioners from other disciplines, whose priorities were inevitably mainly determined by developments in those disciplines. Nevertheless, between the late nineteenth and mid twentieth centuries much important work was done, and Lee effectively reviews the progress of research into mortality, marriage and fertility patterns (though the section on migration is rather short and misses some important contributions). A key development which he notes is that the study of population was wrested away from statisticians and actuaries (who were often outside the academic sector) and placed in the hands of social scientists. This development paved the way for the institutionalisation of the discipline within universities in the 1960s.


D. Oxley, ‘“Pitted but not pitied” or, does smallpox make you small?’, *Economic History Review*, 59, 617–35.

The first of these papers is a comment on an article published by Oxley in the *Economic History Review* in 2003 and reviewed in *Local Population Studies* (*LPS*), 73 (2004), 94–5. In her original paper Oxley argued that the apparent effect of smallpox in reducing height among Londoners in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was probably spurious, and arose because people who had suffered from smallpox were more likely to have spent their childhoods in insanitary and overcrowded urban environments, where they were subject to repeated bouts of sickness. It was this long-term exposure to adverse disease environments that caused their stunting, rather than smallpox. Leunig and Voth disagree, claiming that an alternative analysis of Oxley’s data leads to the conclusion that smallpox was, indeed, responsible for stunting. In her reply, Oxley uses an augmented data set (though still based on records from Wandsworth prison and indents of transported convicts) to reinforce the conclusions of her original paper. The question of the impact of smallpox on height has received repeated attention in the literature, and articles on the subject were also reviewed in *LPS* 69 (2002), 88.


This is the latest in a series of papers about Dade registers to appear in *Local Population Studies* (*LPS*) (the previous contributions are R. Bellingham, ‘Dade parish registers’, *LPS* 73 (2004), 51–60 and C. Galley, ‘An exercise in Dade
parish register demography: St Olave, York, 1771–1785’, *LPS* 74 (2005), 75–83). Levene studies the three parishes of Ackworth, Ilkley and Rothwell in the West Riding of Yorkshire during the late eighteenth century, all of which had Dade registers, though for different periods. She applies two methods to estimate infant mortality: a family reconstitution approach which links baptisms to burials and an aggregate approach using the overall burial to baptism ratio. Both methods produce infant mortality rates which are low compared with other areas of England during the same period—though not unrealistically so. Of more concern is the fact that in two of the three parishes, the rates for the period when Dade registers were used were substantially lower than those for the earlier period when conventional registers were kept. The conclusion is that, despite the superior content of Dade registers compared to ordinary ones, historians and demographers should be wary of inferring that their coverage (measured as the proportion of deaths recorded) was also better.


Following the papers by Hurren, and Hurren and King reviewed in *Local Population Studies*, 77 (2006), 87–8, this paper also looks at the operation of the Poor Law during the ‘crusade against out-relief’ after 1870. The specific topic at issue is the extent to which the relatives of those who applied for relief were asked to support them. Levine-Clark shows that in the Stourbridge Union it was common for offspring to be asked to support their elderly parents—indeed, out-relief was often refused to applicants whose offspring would not support them when the Poor Law authorities thought they should do so. However, account was taken of the other responsibilities which the offspring might have, so that, for example, offspring with their own children to support (that is, the claimant’s grandchildren) might be exempted. Generally, unmarried sons were expected to provide support, and sons were prevailed upon more readily than daughters.


Longfellow’s article is framed by discussion of the public sphere, but her focus is very much on the family and the household. In it, she problematises the distinction between public and private living, arguing that contemporaries saw their personal and communal lives as being intimately connected. Indeed, she argues that the notion of a ‘private life’ hinges on definitions and perceptions of privacy: prayer, sexual activity and family relationships might all be regarded as private affairs, but were ‘frequently viewed within the context of [their] place in the community’ (p. 321). This means that it is all but impossible to draw a clear demarcation between actions that were public and those that were private. By implication, the same problem arises when identifying spaces in this binary manner. Such blurring reminds of the need to be cautious in projecting back present-day values and even nineteenth-century constructs (such as that of separate spheres) onto earlier periods.
B. Luckin, ‘Revisiting the idea of degeneration in urban Britain, 1830–1900’, *Urban History*, 33, 234–52.

This article re-examines the notions of the degeneration of the population of the poorer parts of Britain’s towns and cities during the nineteenth century. These notions took several forms. Some commentators emphasised the deleterious effect of the urban environment on health and well-being (citing a host of baleful effects ranging from those of miasmatic theory to the problem of lack of exposure to the sun). Others focused on the delinquency of urban working-class communities. Luckin considers both these and other strands of the degeneracy argument. He also speculates that the ideas of degeneration may have been less well developed in relation to provincial cities than they were in the case of London.


The behaviour and final speeches of those condemned to be hanged were viewed by contemporaries as potentially powerful words and deeds. Indeed, the fact that many of the contemporary accounts upon which MacKenzie draws were published at the time confirms the level of interest that they held among the literate classes of seventeenth and early eighteenth-century England. During this time, the countenance, attitudes and words of the condemned were held to be strong indicators of guilt or innocence. This was partly because calmness and charity (not least in the outward forgiveness of those who had accused, witnessed or tried the condemned) were seen as signs of God’s help. Reinforcing such impressions were challenges made by the condemned to the court’s ruling. These often contrasted man’s justice with God’s justice, and involved solemn protestations of innocence. In these ways, the crowd could be swayed in favour of the condemned. However, they could also be duped by a good show which pretended innocence, a point explored by MacKenzie in relation to highwaymen. Gradually, such speeches lost their rhetorical and emotional impact. By the mid eighteenth century, the courts were viewed as the ultimate arbiter of innocence or guilt and the way of dying ceased to hold metaphysical meanings, at least for the literate classes.


The ‘great enrolments’ of the late fourteenth-century poll taxes are a familiar source and readily available in the National Archives. Less frequently used are the detailed local enrolments which give names and positions of individual tax payers—several of which survive for ecclesiastical communities. This article uses the Clerical Poll Taxes of 1377–1381 to estimate the number of secular and religious clergy in the province of York. It gives an overall estimate and then breaks this down into friars and lay brothers, as well as by the houses to which the monks belonged. Mackie challenges some of the earlier estimates based on the same source, arguing that they are too high—by as much as 36 per cent.
V. McMahon, ‘Reading the body: dissection and the “murder” of Sarah Stout, Hertfordshire, 1699’, *Social History of Medicine*, 19, 19–35.

This article focuses on the way in which forensic evidence was acquired and deployed, specifically in relation to murder trials. A case-study approach is taken, with one trial being investigated in detail to reveal the practices of post-mortem examinations and the subsequent interplay between medical and lay evidence. While its subject matter is quite specific, this article touches on a number of important themes within local population history, including the role of women as traditional sources of knowledge and the conflict between popular/traditional and modern/scientific forms of understanding and measuring the world around us.

D. Mills, ‘Canwick (Lincolnshire) and Melbourn (Cambridgeshire) in comparative perspective within the open-closed village model’, *Rural History*, 17, 1–22.

The model of open and closed villages (or parishes) in the countryside of eighteenth and nineteenth century England has generated a substantial literature over the past 30 years or so, much of which is helpfully listed in the footnotes to this paper. For readers unfamiliar with the distinction, ‘closed’ villages were those where one (or at most two or three) landowners owned all the land within a parish and were therefore able to exert a high degree of control over population change, principally through controlling the supply of housing. In ‘open’ villages, by contrast, there were large numbers of small landowners, whose economic interest often lay in building and renting out cottages if the demand was there. Dennis Mills has been perhaps the leading proponent of the utility of the model, and in his latest contribution he describes the evolution of two parishes: one closed (Canwick) and the other open (Melbourn). Perhaps the most interesting feature of the paper is its dynamic and historical treatment of the two parishes. Rather than presenting a static cross-sectional comparison, Mills here treats the processes by which closed and open parishes evolved, and indeed comes close to identifying in Canwick the process of ‘closure’, by which a landowning family intensified its control over a parish, for example, by buying up existing housing and incorporating it within a defined ‘estate’.

I. Mortimer, ‘Why were probate accounts made? Methodological issues concerning the historical use of administrators’ and executors’ accounts’, *Archives*, 31 (114) 2–17.

Probate records are a familiar source for local population historians, but attention usually focuses on either wills or inventories. Mortimer argues that this is largely a result of the relative numbers involved. He estimates that over two million wills and one million inventories exist for 1550–1750, whereas there are only 43,000 accounts. This means that they are rarely found for individuals (so local family or historians often do not think to look for them) and are difficult to analyse thematically. Added to these problems are the methodological issues that form the focus of this article. These are seen as
relating directly to the processes whereby accounts came to be drawn up. Mortimer suggests that a small proportion (perhaps 5 per cent) were the result of legal precedents; 20–25 per cent were called for by family members and creditors wanting to know where their money had gone; and 70–75 per cent were called for by the courts because they were aware of impending expenses, generally in the form of outstanding debts. Accounts might thus be requested and drawn up years after the death of the testator. Moreover, they tended to be created for wealthier individuals and therefore are even more socially selective than other probate records. Finally, there are profound geographical disparities in their creation and survival. Whilst all this seems a barrier to their use by historians, Mortimer does strike a more positive note in suggesting that the accounts were generally reliable if not exhaustively accurate, not least because they had to be believable by the courts. Readers of *Local Population Studies* will probably be aware that probate accounts and their use are discussed in an *LPS* Supplement: T. Arkell, N. Evans and N. Goose eds, *When death do us part: understanding and interpreting the probate records of early modern England* (Oxford 2000, repr. 2004), chs. 5, 11 and 12.


Public ceremony was central to the civic and communal life of medieval and early-modern towns, often being seen as a mechanism to celebrate civic identity and cement elite power. This article examines the ceremonies surrounding medieval royal entries to the city of York from the perspective of those who produced the spectacle. Drawing on minutes of the civic council, Murphy argues that the ceremony was controlled by a mercantile oligarchy that effectively excluded other internal groups (including the clergy) and resisted external interference (most notably from the nobility). They used York’s topography to reinforce mercantile dimensions of the ceremony and the city, creating an urban and civic image in their own likeness. This was not a process of civic consensus, therefore, but a mechanism whereby one group sought to bolster their social and political standing at a time when their grip on political and economic power was starting to wane. It was legitimised by the civic administration’s claim to talk for the city as a whole, but in reality was an opportunity to articulate mercantile identity and power to the visiting royalty and, more importantly, to other local elites.


This paper reports a study which traces out-migrants from four villages in south-east Shropshire using the machine-readable and searchable files of the 1881 census enumerators’ books (supplemented by those for 1861 and 1901). The main conclusions of the paper are that out-migration was very common but that there was no step-change in its intensity or form in the late nineteenth century: ‘[m]ost people still moved in a series of short hops. Most people followed socio-economic contours that were laid down in medieval times, by moving towards the nearest market town’ (p. 184). Large urban areas were the
destinations of only a minority of migrants, and many agricultural workers who moved were still working in occupations related to agriculture in their destination locations.


This article examines the portrayal by the Ordnance Survey of three types of institutional buildings: poorhouses and workhouses; asylums and prisons, over the period since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Studying successive editions of the one-inch maps for the same area reveals the changing names given to, and uses of, the buildings (for example workhouses becoming ‘public assistance institutions’ and eventually being converted into hospitals).


The economic and demographic growth of early modern London has been well documented by historians, although most attention has been directed to the late Elizabethan period and the early seventeenth century. The assumption has been that the economy of early Tudor London was simply dominated by woollen cloth. This article seeks to reappraise this view, by using the newly discovered records of the aborted Amicable Grant of 1525. This preliminary assessment for raising revenue for Henry VIII contains information relating to London’s wealthiest merchants, detailing their trade and residence. This data is analysed by Oldland to produce a new assessment of London’s economic vitality, both in terms of its relative performance compared to provincial cities as well as the shifting rank order in the wealth of the city’s parishes and wards. According to Oldfield, early Tudor London experienced massive economic growth on the back of the cloth trade, with significant and multiple implications for the city: not only in terms of entrenching London’s domination of the cloth trade and associated industries, but also in terms of population growth, consumption of luxury goods, and the development of London’s credit monopoly.


The planned village movement in Scotland ‘started in 1730, reached a peak about 1800 and had all but ceased by 1850’ (p. 105). Philip explains that it was a way of managing economic development and rural population growth at a time when agricultural employment was falling. The movement encouraged surplus rural dwellers to move to new planned settlements in which factories could be built and alternative employment thereby provided. Using a range of sources, including census materials from the first six censuses of Scotland, she shows that the number of planned villages in Dumfriesshire and Galloway was much larger than was previously thought. She concludes that an understanding of the planned village movement is vital when seeking to explain present-day
settlement patterns. It would also seem fundamental to any account of the 
historical population geography of this part of Scotland, at least.

D. Postles, ‘Surviving lone motherhood in early-modern England’, Seventeenth 
Century, 21, 160–183.

This article looks at the experience of unmarried motherhood, and in 
particular, mothers’ migratory patterns, using the records of the archdeaconry 
courts of Colchester and Essex in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth 
centuries. Postles finds that such women often took flight when pregnant, or 
else as young mothers, in order to avoid the opprobrium of bringing up an 
illegitimate child in their home community. He explores the involvement of 
men in this process, suggesting that men could act as boarders of women and 
as facilitators of movement. Such men were often motivated by obligations of 
‘kinship and compassion’, as well as through complicity in the pregnancy, 
although contrary to some interpretations of women in early modern England, 
Postles presents the mothers as passive and lacking in agency. This article 
looks only at the records of the ecclesiastical courts, and it would be interesting 
(were it possible) to see whether the same patterns of behaviour would be 
evincing from a similar analysis of the recently created and expanding 
jurisdiction of the civil courts.

W.T.R. Pryce, ‘Region or national territory? Regionalism and the idea of the 

Readers of Local Population Studies (LPS) may recall the paper by Phythian- 
Adams published in the journal in 1993 (‘Local history and societal history’, 
LPS 51, 30–45) in which he attempted to map the ‘cultural regions’ of England 
and Wales. This paper is in the same tradition, but focuses exclusively on 
Wales. It tells the story of how a succession of geographers from the School of 
Geography at Aberystwyth attempted to delineate the sub-regions of Wales 
during the twentieth century. A variety of factors was used to try to divide up 
the country into internally coherent regions, though the most common was 
some measure of the extent to which the population used the Welsh language.

D. Randall, ‘Joseph Mead, novellante: news, sociability and credibility in early 

Habermas’s notion of a public sphere, involving the engagement in political 
and cultural interchange, often in new public spaces or new forums of 
discussion, remains an important construct in understanding public and 
private life in early modern England. This article explores one dimension of 
this through a detailed investigation of the reading and writing of Joseph 
Mead. Central to many of Mead’s letters to his fellow gentry was the exchange 
of news. Indeed, this formed the traditional way in which people got to know 
about important events, new ideas and so on. However, Mead not only read 
and passed on news gleaned from trusted sources (his gentry correspondents) 
he also read the broadsheets and included news from this source in his letters. 
That said, he was careful to distinguish the two, and give greater credence to 
news from a known and trusted source. Quite apart from being a fascinating
study of the networks of correspondents that criss-crossed England in the early modern period, this piece has a broader significance. First, it highlights both the way in which social capital was constructed and its key role in determining the level of trust and reliability accorded to individuals. As such, there is important common ground here with recent studies in the so-called new institutional economics. Second, it offers a counter to the usual emphasis on public spaces of sociability: people were private as well as public creatures.


It has long been considered that during the early centuries of Anglican registration of baptisms and burials, the burial registers were fairly complete as a record of deaths. A serious deterioration in quality only made its appearance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, associated with population increase, urbanisation, the rise of nonconformity, and overwork (leading to lack of diligence) among clergymen. In this article Razzell examines the reliability of adult burial registration over the period from 1538 to 1849 by comparing entries in the burial register with those from a range of other contemporaneous sources, including the Marriage Duty ‘censuses’ of the 1690s, probate records, and the census enumerators’ books of the mid nineteenth century. He concludes that, contrary to the accepted wisdom, ‘burial registration was deficient in all periods between 1538 and 1851’, that it was worse in larger than in smaller parishes, and that this was mainly due to clerical negligence (p. 55).


It is well known that by the mid twentieth century a social gradient in adult mortality had developed in England, with the middle classes and non-manual workers having considerably lower mortality than poorer groups and manual workers. The origins of this gradient are, however, less clear: social differentials in adult mortality in the nineteenth century have not been given particularly close attention in the academic literature (though the same cannot be said of infant mortality). In this paper, Razzell and Spence use a variety of sources to build a case that, in and before the nineteenth century, no clear relationship between adult mortality and social class (and hence between adult mortality and wealth) existed. The rich died at a rate similar to that of the poor. They suggest that this was because any advantages of wealth or social status were compensated for by excessive consumption of rich food and alcohol, lack of exercise and the use of tobacco. Razzell and Spence admit that the evidence they have assembled is insufficient to prove their case, but it is certainly sufficient to provoke debate, and, it is hoped, to stimulate further research into the question.


These are two of the first articles to appear describing the community reconstruction project being undertaken by Reid, Davies and Garrett on the populations of the Isle of Skye, the Scottish lowland town of Kilmarnock, and two other smaller communities in south-west and north-east Scotland. The aim of the project is to use the census enumerators’ books and the Scottish civil registers (which, unlike the English civil registers, are available to researchers), together with other sources, in a record linkage exercise to reconstruct the populations of these localities between 1841 and 1901.

The *History and Computing* article considers the methodology of the record linkage. The approach adopted makes use of the fact that people do not live independently, and are invariably associated with other people in the data sources (for example, living in the same household at the time of a census, or being recorded together on a marriage certificate as father and daughter). By taking advantage of these documented interrelationships, the linkage between two records relating to any individual person can be facilitated, and the degree of confidence in a particular link greatly enhanced. The article can be recommended to any readers of *Local Population Studies* interested in record linkage using nineteenth century sources—even those compelled to work with the more limited range of sources available for England and Wales.

The second article analyses the mortality of legitimate and illegitimate children on the Isle of Skye between 1861 and around 1900. The analysis shows that illegitimate children had a greater risk of death, and that this excess risk was particularly high during the 1880s and 1890s when economic conditions on the island were very difficult. The authors attribute this finding to the need for single mothers to leave the island to find work, with the result that their children were left in the (presumably less than adequate) care of relatives.


This is a history of congregationalism in the smaller towns and villages of Leicestershire during last third of the nineteenth century and the first decade or so of the twentieth century. Rimmington shows that the membership of congregational chapels in the country held up well right up to the outbreak of World War I. In rural areas, numbers were roughly constant between 1900 and 1911, which actually meant an increased proportion of the population of many villages, since rural depopulation was occurring.


Roberts focuses on the well-known and well-researched Carnes—a family
which remained prominent in Glamorgan, if not nationally, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. Their story is a complex one, made still more complicated by the problems of accurately identifying key individuals and their careers, particularly through the turbulent years of the civil wars and interregnum. Much of the article is taken up with pursuing the intricacies of the Carnes’ political and familial affairs, and there is relatively little discussion of the more general relationship between the gentry and office holding. However, it is clear that political office was not necessarily sought after by the rural gentry and that it could bring problems (including a conflict between local and national loyalties) as well as status.


This paper suggests that the census enumerators’ books (CEBs) can provide a useful additional source for those interested in the English landed gentry during the second half of the nineteenth century. They complement other sources in that they provide evidence about the minor (parish) gentry—who often did not leave extensive archival material, and also furnish a snapshot of the living arrangements of gentry at a point in time—which archival material or genealogical evidence typically does not. The article includes many examples of listings of gentry households in the 1851 and 1881 CEBs.


This short paper is a sort of companion to the paper published by Sheppard in *Local Population Studies*, 72 (2004), 16–33, entitled ‘The provenance of Brighton’s railway workers, 1841–1861’. Here, she turns her attention to agricultural labourers, examining the returns of the 1861 census which show that 1.6 per cent of all adult males aged over 20 years in Brighton described themselves in this way. Sheppard shows that these workers lived in four main clusters in poorer parts of the town, many of them had migrated to Brighton fairly recently, and the overcrowded and underemployed parishes of the Weald were well represented among their places of birth.


This is a contribution to the recent upsurge of interest in the operation of the New Poor Law in the second half of the nineteenth century. Smith analyses the reasons why people were admitted to the Northampton lunatic asylum, and concludes that poverty was an important factor. It seems that the asylum was used by relatives and friends of inmates—as well as by the local poor law authorities—as a means of ‘long-term care or short-term respite’ to enable poor families cope with difficult times (p. 121). There is evidence that the asylum was offered to the ‘deserving’ poor as an alternative to the workhouse.

The hand spinners of the yarn used to make worsted cloth are a neglected group of workers. In this paper, Soderlund explains how, despite their marginal position and their pitifully low pay, they managed to exert considerable influence on the development of the worsted industry in west Yorkshire during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The spinners were mainly women, and worked in their own homes under a putting-out system. Supervision of their work was initially light, and they developed a tradition of embezzlement and sharp practice to boost their incomes. This eventually led the scions of the industry to make a series of attempts to police their activities, all of which were resisted by the spinners, supported by the communities in which they lived and worked. The spinners were assisted in their efforts to frustrate the increasingly zealous supervision of their work by their control over the supply of yarn, which gave them leverage over the manufacturers when demand for cloth rose. However, the spinners eventually overplayed their hand, and the manufacturers’ impatience with them accelerated the introduction of machine-spinning into the industry, so that by 1810 the hand-spinning era was over.

H. Southall, ‘*A vision of Britain through time*: making sense of 200 years of census reports’, *Local Population Studies*, **76**, 76–89.

*A vision of Britain through time* is a web site which integrates and makes accessible to users 200 years of census data for small geographical areas in Britain. The site builds on the Great Britain Historical Geographical Information System, which has been available for some time from AHDS History at the University of Essex. In this article, Southall describes the construction of the site, gives readers a brief tour of its main features and suggests fruitful ways in which local historians might make efficient use of the wealth of information it contains. Readers will find the site at http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk. This reviewer (AH) had no difficulty in accessing it and following through Southall’s suggestions for navigating the site.


This article examines the range of health care made available under the Old Poor Law in rural Northamptonshire. Stringer points out that the local poor law authorities drew on a range of health care suppliers, from professionals brought in from outside, to informal nursing care provided within the local community. There is some evidence that the nature of the care provided depended on such factors as the likelihood of a cure, and the potential contribution of the sick person to the parish economy.

As historians of marriage and the family have shown, marriage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was increasingly subject to regulation and control by both the church and secular authorities. This fascinating article shows how this process was bolstered by a linguistic entrenchment of monogamous matrimony in successive biblical translations between 1530 and 1611. The English Reformation generated many new biblical translations, and Tadmor shows how these versions removed or modified references to sexual and domestic unions that were, in the original Hebrew version, either ambiguous or not in conformity with the model of marriage that the church wished to promote. In this way, a biblical discourse of marriage (and as Tadmor reminds us, over 422,000 copies of the bible were sold between c.1564 and 1616) helped to render a particular form of marriage as normative, leading to an unprecedented convergence of ecclesiastical values and social practice.


Readers of *Local Population Studies* interested in the historical development of demographic thought will find this article fascinating. As Théré and Rohrbasser note, the first life tables and estimates of human life expectancy were developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, often based on the empirical data available in the form of the London Bills of Mortality. This article, however, traces the particular development of texts on the differential rates of mortality experienced by sex. The authors describe the writings of two Dutchmen, Nicolaas Struyck (1687–1769) and Willem Kersseboom (1691–1771), one German, Johann Peter Süßmilch (1707–1767), one Frenchman, Antoine Deparcieux (1703–1768), and others, all of whom observed and attempted to explain the greater longevity of females, often noting that such inequality was also variable by age. Their explanations, however, reflect both the rudimentary state of empirical enquiry and the not insignificant influence of religion: Süßmilch, for example, considered that the imbalanced sex ratio at birth was eventually rendered even, as parity was obtained by males dying more quickly than females. Other writers invoked natural history (‘biology’), arguing that women’s softer bones, cartilage and muscles took longer to ‘solidify’ than men’s, hence women’s greater longevity. It was also argued that male infants required more food than females, whilst the explanation of Jean-Baptiste Moheau (1745–1794) hints at what would now be called a gendered lifestyle difference: men, Moheau observed, took ‘all the homicidal professions’.


This is a written-up version of a talk given to the Hampshire Field Club in Winchester in January 2006. Tiller discusses a range of issues connected with the practice of local history, motivated by the challenges of writing the local history of the recent past. Readers of *Local Population Studies* might be especially interested in her comments on the relationship between what she calls ‘local’ local history and ‘academic’ local history, for the examples she discusses include the research which led to the publication of E.A. Wrigley and


Historical demographers are accustomed to discussing fertility as a key determinant of population dynamics, yet it is generally discussed almost in the abstract, rather than the result of real people participating in real sexual acts. This paper considers contemporary attitudes to sexual intercourse, conception and pornography, focusing in particular on representations of sex in contemporary pornographic texts. While modern thinking separates these three activities, they were intimately linked in the seventeenth-century mind. Since sexual pleasure was seen as incomplete without the possibility of conception, how people viewed sex as a pleasurable activity had important implications for reproduction and thus for population dynamics. Furthermore, both sex and reproduction were linked to broader conceptions of the state, thus connecting early modern social and economic stability with reproductive ability.


In this article, Townsend engages with the debate over the emergence of distinct economically specialised regions during the industrial revolution. The essence of her argument is that ‘neither industrialisation nor regional development was a uniform process’ (p. 291), and that industrialisation did not necessarily lead to growing regional integration and stronger regional identity. Taking the east Midlands as her case study, she draws on data on migration to the three principal towns—Nottingham, Leicester and Derby—to demonstrate a lack of urban-centred integration. This is accounted for by reference to the dominant status of these three towns in their respective county urban networks (they effectively short-circuited any hierarchically structured linkages). Although the hosiery industry was a common feature of all three counties and might have acted as an agent of regional coherence, its national-level connections with places such as London meant that its impact as a unifying force in forging a distinctive regional identity was diluted. The paper uses a range of sources in the analysis, including apprenticeship indentures, marriage registers and settlement examinations.


This paper uses detailed estate logbooks to examine the work done by women on the Dixon estate in north Lincolnshire, which included parts of the parishes of Holton-le-Moor, Nettleton and Thornton-le-Moor. Women were engaged in a range of tasks, most commonly haymaking, weeding and harvesting, but also
threshing, shearing and even arduous tasks like dung spreading. Their employment varied seasonally, being most common in the summer months and rare in the winter. The amount of labour carried out by women seems to have declined during the period under study.


These studies of poor relief in two groups of Kentish parishes illustrate wonderfully why Mark Blaug once described the Old Poor Law as a ‘welfare state in miniature’. Both authors examine parochial accounts which detail rate assessments and disbursement to the poor. Both find that the poor law was operating as an all encompassing system of welfare, providing relief to those who were victims of both life-cycle poverty, such as widows, and those whose hardship was temporary, such as victims of epidemic disease. *Local Population Studies* readers who are familiar with the historiography of the Old Poor Law will find much here of interest, not least as a reminder that the seventeenth and eighteenth century poor law was potentially generous to its settled population, providing relief to a wide range of recipients in both cash and kind.


Here Virgoe, a recent contributor to *Local Population Studies*, tells the story of the serious typhoid epidemic in Worthing in 1893, which was the largest of the late nineteenth century in the number of cases notified (over 1,400), and which led to 186 deaths. The epidemic struck the young disproportionately, and more women were affected than men. Virgoe discusses the (still rather uncertain) reasons for the contamination of the water supply which led to the epidemic, and also considers both short and long-term consequences for the economy of the town.


This paper tells the tragic story of a middle-class, educated spinster who adopted the illegitimate daughter of an Italian teenager in the days before adoption was legal in England and Wales. Walker explains how the relationship between the woman and her adopted child gradually deteriorated, the daughter eventually dying of tuberculosis in a workhouse infirmary. The paper is full of illuminating insights into the Victorian social structure and cultural attitudes towards the family.


In these two articles, Patrick Wallis advances two significant reappraisals of the history of the plague in early modern England. The first looks at the village of Eyam, and shows how the history of this infamous village has been shaped and (re)written over time. As Wallis suggests, the narrative of heroic self-sacrifice was one largely constructed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and is sustained today by the economics of the tourist trade and heritage industry, as well as by what is termed here the apparent ‘orientation towards the local as a foundation for English national identity’.

In the second essay, Wallis looks at the exacting toll that plague could levy on early modern communities. In particular, he looks at the issue of flight, a short-term migration that was a natural response for those with the wherewithal to leave their home and escape the threat, using a study of the medical practitioners of London during such times. It might readily be assumed, for example, that doctors were expected—by reason of a moral or ethical obligation—to stay at the location of the plague, in order to treat its victims. Yet such a view is ahistorical, a reflection of nineteenth-century medical ethics and a medical historiography that sought to create a virtuous and heroic image of the doctor. In fact, whereas magistrates and clergymen suffered an obligation to stay within a plague-ridden community, physicians were under no such expectation. As Wallis describes, the social and economic position of medical practitioners meant that their obligation was to their private patients and doctors did not even practice under a commitment to treat all medical conditions. Doctors chose to stay or flee on much the same basis as others in the community. Plague, however, did present medical practitioners with opportunities. The early modern medical community was riven with rivalries between groups such as the London College of Physicians, apothecaries and irregular practitioners. The flight of physicians, for example, presented those irregular practitioners who stayed with the chance to promote and legitimise themselves, and to attack the College’s official monopoly. This is marked by a considerable rhetorical output in pamphlets and treatises, and also underlines the relatively marginal role played by medics in battling the plague at this time.